THE

LORD'S SUPPER.

By Rev. SAMUEL LUCKEY, D.D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

By Rev. BISHOP JANES.

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."—1 Cor. xi, 26.

NEW YORK:
PHILLIPS & HUNT.
CINCINNATI:
WALDEN & STOWE.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1859,

BY CARLTON & PORTER,

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District of New-York.

INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE examined the plan of this work, and partially its execution. In my judgment it is an excellent book, published very opportunely. Its title sufficiently indicates its object and its scope. It does not claim to be an elaborate, or scholastic, or controversial presentation of the subject. It is a plain, practical, spiritual treatise on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It might have been appropri-

ately styled "The Communicant's Assistant," or, "The Communicant's Manual." It aims to guide, and encourage, and aid the Christian in a proper and profitable observance of this holy sacrament, a duty by many members of the Church but imperfectly understood, by some wholly neglected, and by others observed with but little profit. We think no one desirous of understanding the nature, object, and obligation of this sacrament, can read this little volume without much benefit. Its wide circulation, by promoting intelligent and devout observance of this divine

institution, must advance the faith, and spirituality, and steadfastness of the Church. The book also sets forth the necessity of Church membership, as a logical inference from the Scriptural and sacred duty of all believers to observe this sacrament. This topic is amplified, and illustrated, and urged in a forcible and felicitous manner. Nothing could be more timely than the discussion of this subject. The pastoral spirit and clear manner in which this duty is set forth and enforced in this work can hardly fail to determine any vacillating person who will candidly and

prayerfully read it, to unite himself to the visible Church of Christ. I cheerfully commend the book to the Christian public, and anticipate much good from its publication.

E. S. JANES.

NEW YORK, *Feb.* 4, 1859.

PREFACE.

SOME of the reasons for publishing at this time a treatise on the Sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER are the following: The institution is of divine appointment, and calculated above all others to strengthen the faith of those who observe it in a right manner, and to promote their growth in grace. It embraces all the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel essentially connected with that of the ATONEMENT, which are presented to the humble recipient of the ordinance in a way to make the most favorable impression upon his mind and heart, and to kindle in his bosom the flame of devotion. It is God's own institution, in which he has promised to meet with his people, to renew his covenant of mercy and grace with them, and to edify and strengthen them in the divine life. As a means of grace eminently adapted to advance believers in piety and holi-

ness, the primitive disciples of Christ devoutly observed it as a part, and the principal part, of their service every time they met for worship; and no violence on the part of their enemies, not even the terrors of martyrdom, could induce them to neglect it. But it is not so now. Many members of churches make it a matter of mere convenience, rather than of principle and duty, whether they observe the ordinance or not. It evidently has so slight a hold upon the consciences and feelings of the masses of Church members in general, that the moral power it was designed to exert, and did exert in primitive times, is realized to only a very small extent, if realized at all, in edifying the body of Christ. And in addition to all this, since the commencement of the great revival which has spread over the country, many who have by means of it been brought to a knowledge of God have not connected themselves with any Church, and seem to have settled down in the opinion that they can serve God as acceptably, and be as useful in promoting the cause of Christ, in neglect of the ordinances which he has commanded all his followers to observe, as by observing them. Thus

remaining outside of the fold, as lonely sheep in the wilderness, they are exposed to be seized and carried away by false shepherds who roam through the land, "and come not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy." These unsuspecting wanderers, who disregard the voice of the good Shepherd, and refuse or neglect to come into the fold at his bidding, need instruction and admonition to rescue them from the dangers to which they are exposed. These reasons, with others which might be named, have induced a desire that a treatise on this subject might be published adapted to the wants of the Church and the public at this juncture of time.

The immediate cause of my undertaking this work was, that I was officially requested by the "Ministers' Association" of the Wyoming district to preach a sermon before that body on the subject of the Sacrament. Not being able, on account of necessary absence, to comply with their request, it was repeated at a subsequent meeting. Being thus led to turn my attention particularly to an investigation of the subject, I was more deeply impressed than ever before with the importance of it; and the materials which,

by a cursory view, seemed easily wrought into a sermon of ordinary length, have grown into a volume. Sure I am, if the subject shall take as deep a hold, and make as strong an impression upon the reader's feelings and upon his soul, while perusing the work, as it did upon mine while writing it, he will profit by it. I only wonder that I never before appreciated this ordinance as I was led to do while investigating it. That the reader, in perusing this unpretending little volume, may be benefited in like manner, is my most sincere and ardent prayer.

As to the style of the work I have no care to say anything. I have endeavored to express my thoughts in the plainest manner, so as to be understood by all. If I have succeeded in this I shall be satisfied. And if the work shall prove a blessing to any, in stirring them up to duty, and advancing them in piety and holiness, it will be more than a compensation for all my study and labor. God grant that it may!

S. LUCKEY.

EAST GAINESVILLE,
September, 1858.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER..... 9

CHAPTER II.

THE SIMPLICITY OF MANNER IN WHICH THE LORD'S SUPPER WAS INSTITUTED..... 17

CHAPTER III.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ORDINANCE, AS INDICATED BY THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH ATTENDED THE INSTITUTION OF IT, AND IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED IT. 23

CHAPTER IV.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A MEMORIAL... 34

CHAPTER V.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A PASSOVER.... 65

CHAPTER VI.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A EUCHARIST... 95

CHAPTER VII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A COMMUNION.. 102

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A SACRAMENT... 171

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS..... 229

THE

LORD'S SUPPER.

CHAPTER I.

THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.—Matt. xxvi, 26-30.

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.—Mark xiv, 22-26.

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.—Luke xxii, 19-20.

For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and, when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.—1 Cor. xi, 23-26.

A PERPETUAL observance of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was enjoined by Christ upon his disciples under circumstances calculated to make a deep and abiding impression on the minds and hearts of all who respect his commandments. The institution of the ordinance, and the command to observe it, are set forth in the portions of Scripture I have quoted above; and our duty respecting it is to be deduced from a careful examination of the acts of the Saviour in instituting it, the circumstances under which he performed those acts, and the terms employed by him to explain their import and design.

Let us consider for a moment the time and place chosen by the Master for the institution of this ordinance. It was at his last celebration of the Jewish Passover, which was instituted and observed in commemoration of the deliverance of God's chosen people from Egyptian bondage, and typical of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John i, 29. It thus marks the period of the Church's transition from the dispensation of the law to that of the Gospel, and designates the institution as a gospel ordinance, taking the place of the paschal supper under the law.

It was a time, too, in the history of Christ's humiliation, calculated to make every remembrance of it impressively tender and dear to all his pious followers.

It was "the same night in which he was betrayed." 1 Cor. xi, 23. This solemn truth dwelt in his own breast. Though he had repeatedly signified to his disciples that he was soon to be offered up, they probably had no such lively view of the event as the history of a few days furnished them and all who should afterward believe. They were not probably affected by the com

mand, "Do this in remembrance of me," at the first supper, as they were after the scene of the crucifixion. But the fact that in his bosom alone dwelt the secret that it was his dying injunction to his endeared followers, was calculated to render it the more tender and impressive when in after time they should recall the event with all its heart-stirring associations.

These associations are full of interest, and cannot fail, if devoutly called up in the mind, favorably to dispose the heart and affections preparatory to a discharge of this Christian duty. I dwell upon this thought because it is eminently practical in its tendency. Christian, contemplate your Saviour as he sits among his disciples, piously celebrating for the last time the feast of the passover. Three years he had led this confiding band through evil and good report, instructing, comforting, and blessing them. Great was his love toward them, and great was their love toward him. He knew their expectations of a temporal kingdom in this world. He knew their ignorance of the nature and glory of the kingdom he came to establish. He knew, too, the sorrow that filled their hearts when he said to them, "I

go away." John xvi, 7. With tender regard for their weakness he prepared them, by kind words and soothing promises, which they but imperfectly understood, for the scenes of suffering and sorrow which were about to open upon them. He had conversed with Moses and Elias in presence of some of them, and been transfigured before them, to show them his future glory, and the means by which he must enter into it. He had discoursed to them largely and explicitly upon his coming in the clouds of heaven on the last day to judge the world, and to reward his faithful followers with a crown of glory. He had promised them the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to be with them after his departure. All this, and much more, he had said and done within a few days, to prepare them for the solemn event which was then about to occur. But they understood not what all these things meant. He alone realized the truth that his "hour was come;" and, like a kind and tender father, moved to leave a memorial of affection to his children when about to be called away from them by death, he designates the simple memorial which in all coming time should be a test of their affection for him

Surely indifference to this command of our blessed Lord, made at such a time and under such circumstances, is sad evidence of want of that affection which we owe to him.

On this point I may add that this ordinance was instituted before the event it commemorates had transpired. It was, as all agree, his death upon the cross, which was shortly to occur, rather than his acts and sayings during his ministry, which were past, that he would have them remember. Remember me as your atoning Redeemer and Saviour. But what was there in the death of Christ, considered merely as the tragical end of a great, good, and wise man, which could induce him to desire and enjoin that a perpetual memorial of it should be kept by his followers? It was a death inflicted by human authority upon malefactors, and he would have borne, in the estimation of the world, the ignominy of such a death, however undeserved, had he remained under its power. What was there in such a death of their beloved Master that could induce his disciples to take more interest in it than in his life, or to hold it in joyous memory, and celebrate it by a festive rite? Surely nothing. Rather would they have

banished every thought of it from their mind, as evidence of their disappointed hopes of his triumph over his enemies. Yet it was to celebrate this death, and all the sufferings through which he was about to pass to accomplish it, that the supper was instituted by Christ. How was his Divine mind filled with all the grace and glory conveyed to wretched man by his death upon the cross! Sublime was the spectacle indeed! To see the Man of sorrows, just entering upon the scene of his vicarious sufferings, alone conscious of the benefits of those sufferings to a lost world, instituting a memorial by which his people were to remember him in these sufferings, is evidence of his fidelity to the Father to finish his work, and his care for his followers in providing for them a perpetual means of grace and spiritual edification.

With the scene of the supper fresh in their minds, and the command of their Lord written upon their hearts, I do not wonder that the early disciples commemorated it often; that they made it a part of their service whenever they met for worship. Nor do I wonder that they chose death —the death of martyrs—rather than neglect a

duty so solemnly enjoined upon them. A due reflection upon these circumstances connected with the institution of this ordinance, ought to inspire us with a deeper sense of our obligation more devoutly and more frequently to observe it than is usual with professing Christians.

CHAPTER II.

SIMPLICITY OF MANNER IN WHICH THE ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER WAS INSTITUTED.

The simple manner in which our Lord introduced this ordinance has struck me as worthy of remark. There was no previous announcement of his design to do so. No antecedent command, as in the case of the passover, to prepare for it, or directions how to prepare. No noise as of a mighty rushing wind, or appearance of cloven tongues of fire, as at the outpouring of the Spirit, whose special mission under the Gospel dispensation was to be commemorated by the rite of baptism, as a Gospel ordinance, which was enjoined upon the disciples by their Master after his resurrection. Nothing of the kind occurred to call up the attention of the apostles to what their Master was about to say and do, as anything extraordinary, much less as the introduction of an institution to be observed by his followers in all future time, more important in its nature

and design than any other which had ever been ordained by him, or ever would be. He took bread, gave thanks, and gave it to them to eat; and then took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them to drink. This is all that was visible to the senses in the transaction. And this, it seems, was a usage among the Jews on such occasions. He had eaten the passover with the disciples, at which he had exposed the treachery of Judas. And afterward, as they were eating, "Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them." As they were eating "the bread, or cake," as Mr. Benson says, "which the master of the family used to divide among them after they had eaten the passover." Apart from the words spoken by our Lord, and the attendant circumstances of the passover before, and the crucifixion that so soon followed, what was there in the simple act of distributing the bread and wine among the disciples calculated to impress them that it contained the significance of a solemn rite to be observed by Christians to the end of time? Nothing at all. At most it was a friendly expression of good-will among friends, and might be practiced, and has been, and is

practiced, without suggesting a thought of its being a sacrament. The same is true of the ordinance as administered in Protestant churches to the present day. Who, coming into one of our churches, and witnessing the ceremony of administering the sacrament, without any knowledge of the consecration service, or the design and import of the ordinance other than what they derived from simply witnessing the distribution of the bread and wine, would deem it of sufficient significance to engage the devout attention of the pious, to be observed by them as a religious rite?

This absence of all pomp and show, of everything calculated to invest it with magnificence and render it attractive to the senses as a new and extraordinary institution, is the cause, perhaps, why so little importance has been attached to it from the beginning by unbelievers and merely nominal professors, who seem to say in their hearts, if not in direct terms: "Of what use can so tame and unmeaning a ceremony as eating a little bread and drinking a little wine be to render an habitual observance of it binding upon the consciences of rational beings?" To such it can be of no use. It never was; it never will

be. They are totally disqualified to profit by the ordinance under any circumstances.

But lest more seriously disposed persons be led to undervalue and neglect this ordinance, by indulging in similar reflections respecting it, we should not fail to have the truth duly impressed upon the minds of all, that it is not the ordinance which claims our pious devotions and affectionate remembrance, but the great mystery of the atonement, with all its benefits. For this reason its very simplicity commends it to our approval and admiration. Man has always been prone in his religious tendencies to worship the creature more than the Creator—the sensible representation of the invisible more than the invisible represented. This is the source of all the idolatry in the world. And it has been the unhappy cause of no small degree of idolatry in the Church. Hence did the Lord Jehovah forbid the bowing down in worship to the image or likeness of anything in heaven above or earth beneath. Yet the abomination that maketh desolate has again and again been seen in the holy place. A bigoted devotion has been paid, and is paid, even in Protestant Churches, to mere circumstantials in the ordi-

nances and service of the house of God. Forms and modes have been dignified with the attributes of essentials in religion. And in the worship of God, who, through these forms, instituted for our help, is to be worshiped in spirit and in truth, it is to be feared (it can scarcely be doubted) that these outward things greatly distract the minds of many, if they have not a pre-eminence in them to an extent which amounts to idolatry.

How happily is the institution of the Lord's Supper guarded by its simplicity from all such tendencies. There is nothing in it calculated to divert our thoughts from the great object of our meditations and devout reverence which it is intended to represent. It has indeed been perverted. It has been made an object of worship. But to adapt it to such a use the bread has been converted into the real body, and the wine into the real blood of Christ, by the vain imagination of corrupt minds. Admitting this to be the truth, that our Lord was presenting to the disciples not bread and wine simply, as indicated to the senses, but his real body and blood, and by an easy process it is made an object of worship. But so the apostles did not understand him. So

we do not understand him. The fiction is too absurd for belief. Divested then of everything except what was plainly brought before the senses of the disciples, perceived and contemplated by them as their understanding dictated, the whole transaction seemed eminently devised to guard against its being observed with a veneration for the institution calculated either to impair the mental unity, so important in our approach to our great atoning sacrifice through the use of it, or to divert the mind and affections from the thing signified, by suffering them to be unduly ensnared and captivated by the mere sign.

In our preparation for the communion of the Lord's table, we should endeavor to have our minds duly impressed with this view of the subject, and approach it, through this simple ordinance, by faith in the great atonement it sets forth.

CHAPTER III.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ORDINANCE, AS INDICATED BY THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH ATTENDED THE INSTITUTION OF IT, AND IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED IT.

THIS ordinance, though so simple, is significant —eminently significant—and was designed by the Saviour to be so received and understood by his followers then and forever. Its significance is derived from the time and place of its institution; the circumstances, past, present, and future, with which it was connected; and the words spoken by the Saviour defining its nature and design. A calm consideration of all these will prepare the pious believer to appreciate its value and importance, and observe it in the spirit of that faith and devotion which is necessary to secure the benefits it is designed to convey.

We have already noticed that this sacrament was instituted at the place where our Lord celebrated the last passover with his disciples. The

passover was instituted in Egypt, to commemorate the deliverance of God's people from their bondage to Pharaoh. It was a type, also, of a deliverer which God had promised for the redemption of the world. So it was received and understood by the whole nation, who every year made the offering required by the law for this purpose. Not only was this ordinance annually celebrated until the time of John the Baptist, but during his peculiar dispensation. Christ, with his disciples, observed it. In this, as in other similar acts, he manifested his respect for the ordinances and ceremonies of the law. It was in compliance with an ordinance of the law that he was baptized of John, and thus visibly inaugurated into his public ministry. He taught in the temple, and worshiped there, calling it his Father's house. All through his sojourn with his disciples, he practiced what the law enjoined, condemning only the vain traditions of the Pharisees. All these things he taught and observed, as of divine appointment, up to the time of instituting this sacrament.

The event was rendered peculiarly solemn from the frequent allusions he had made to his dis-

ciples, that the time of his departure out of the world was at hand. He had just told them that he must go up to Jerusalem, and suffer many things, and be put to death. He expressed an earnest desire to eat the passover with them at that time, in language calculated to convince them that in his divine mind there was something of peculiar interest in the occasion. He announced, too, on that occasion, that he would eat it no more with them until he should eat it new in his Father's kingdom. Add to this what followed the supper: Judas, one of them, had been detected and exposed as the guilty betrayer of his master, and left them to consummate his diabolical deed of perfidy and crime. And when they had sung a hymn they went out into the mount of Olives, and he discoursed to them of the things of the kingdom. That beautiful and instructive discourse about the vine and the branches, showing the mystic union between him and his followers, with the soul-supporting declaration: "I go to prepare a place for you," (John xiv, 3,) were uttered to them on that memorable night in the garden of agony and sweat, or on their way to it. Weighed down in spirit, he said to

his beloved James and John: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Matt. xxvi, 38. He was alone in his agony while his wondering, weary disciples were heavy with sleep; and he cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Matt. xxvi, 39. Betrayed by a kiss into the hands of his enemies, to be confronted by false witnesses, and condemned by a mock trial to a malefactor's death, he was rudely dragged away by them. Forsaken by his followers, and denied by one who had said, "Though I die with thee yet will I not deny thee," (Matt. xxvi, 35,) he was made the sport and contempt of profane soldiers and an infuriated populace. He bore his own cross to the place of execution, and fainted under the exhausting burden. And on the cross his greatest anguish was the withdrawal of his Father's comfort and support. He prayed for his enemies, cried, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost at the very time for eating the paschal supper, which, on this occasion, he anticipated with his disciples. All this occurred on the night and the day following the institution of the supper.

And then consider the miracle which attended

this scene: the supernatural darkness which spread over the whole land of Judea, from the sixth until the ninth hour; the terrible earthquake, and the rending of the vail of the temple from the top to the bottom; and all the portentous signs which caused his guilty murderers to tremble, and, as is believed, prevented the service of the paschal supper being observed in all the nation, except by Christ and his disciples, that year.

Deeply and solemnly were his followers affected by the scenes of those few hours. Nor did they fully understand their mysterious import. The shepherd was smitten and the sheep scattered. With his lacerated body their hopes were buried in the tomb. Three dreary days and nights they wandered, and mourned, and wept. But a new impulse was awakened in their throbbing bosoms when, early on the first day of the week, it was proclaimed that the Lord had risen from the dead, and appeared to Mary and to Peter. Echo sounded it out from hill-top to hill-top, and through the vales and ravines within and without the walls of the forsaken and blood-stained city. His guilty murderers caught the

alarm, and colluded with the soldiers to proclaim it a fraud. The disciples were slow to believe it. When Mary Magdalene and her companions told the apostles that two angels whom they had seen at the sepulcher had said, "He is not here, but is risen," (Luke xxiv, 6,) "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." Luke xxiv, 11. They would not be deceived. Nor would the Master deceive them. As their weakness could bear it, he presented additional demonstrations of the reality of his death and resurrection, and the great end for which he died and rose again. As two disciples, on their way to Emmaus, were talking of these things, he revealed himself to them. They returned the same hour to Jerusalem and found the eleven together, and they that were with them, and said to them, "The Lord is risen indeed." Then and there, at the same moment, Jesus stood in their midst. He said, "Behold my hands, and my feet, that it is I myself." He "showed them his hands and feet," his wounds upon the cross, whence issued the blood which he shed "for the remission of sins." Luke xxiv, 39, 40. And he said unto them, "These are the

words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.'" Luke xxiv, 44–48.

Of these things; all these things written aforetime in Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning him; these things prefigured by the types and shadows under the law, up to the very night in which he was betrayed; these things especially pointed to by the sacrifice of the lamb in the passover; these things which they had witnessed, and which had filled their sorrowing hearts for the few days only since they commenced, his suffering in the garden and on the cross, his resurrection from the tomb, and his manifestation of himself to them as their crucified and risen Lord and Saviour, the true and only sacrificial

offering for the sins of the world; these things of which they were his appointed witnesses, though embraced, as matters of testimony, by them within a few days. These were things of awful and thrilling import. In the whole time of the world's long history neither men nor angels have been witnesses of things of such moment, such deep and soul-inspiring interest to our perishing race, as were crowded upon the minds and hearts of the disciples in this brief period.

It was to commemorate these things, and perpetuate their testimony of the truth of his sufferings and resurrection as witnesses of both, that the sacrament of the supper was instituted. So they now undoubtedly understood it, though they could not comprehend it before.

Still more significant were the words our Lord used on that occasion. Take Paul's account of it: "The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, 'Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.' After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, 'This cup is the New Testament in

my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.'" 1 Cor. xi, 23–27.

While breaking the bread he said, "This is my body, which is broken for you." That is, this *represents*, and, in this ordinance, is designed always to represent, to your minds and hearts, my body, *broken* for you. The thing especially represented, to be cherished in your thoughts and influence your hearts, is, my *broken body*—broken for you—*wounded*, *pierced*, *broken* upon the cross, to make atonement for the sin of the world. Of the cup he said, "This cup is the New Testament in my *blood*"—*represents* and sets forth my *blood*, which, as Matthew has it, "is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins." His *blood*, shed upon the cross, was the thing represented by the cup. And in the performance of these acts of eating the broken bread, and drinking the cup, in compliance with the injunction of the Saviour, he said, "Ye do show the *Lord's death* till he come." His *death*, then, and all that is vital and important to a sinful world in his death, is signified by this ordinance.

Did not the disciples so understand it when he had ascended up out of their sight? Doubtful as they may have been, as to the import of the injunction, "This do in remembrance of me," before they had witnessed his death upon the cross, they could not then misunderstand the meaning of the words, "my *body* which is *broken* for you"—"my *blood* which is *shed* for you"—"the Lord's *death*;" and that it was as their *wounded*, *bleeding*, *crucified* Saviour, now exalted to save and bless them, that he would be remembered by them in this ordinance.

It seems clearly evident, then, that Christ crucified; Christ a sacrificial offering for sin; Christ wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities; Christ our passover, as a lamb that was slain; Christ who bore our sins in his own body on the tree; Christ the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world; in a word, Christ who said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," by which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, is the central and all-absorbing idea contained in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This is the subject of our medi-

tations and the object of our faith. And the more exclusively we are limited and shut up to this great central idea of the vicarious sufferings of the Saviour, as a propitiatory offering for sin, the more acceptably and profitably shall we use this divinely-instituted rite for spiritual edification; while they who observe it in any way without having their minds and hearts duly impressed with this vital truth, cannot be profited at all, "not discerning the Lord's body."

As the atonement made by Christ, through his sufferings and death, is the thing to be commemorated by the symbol of the sacrament, we will proceed to consider it more particularly in its application and design.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A MEMORIAL.

As a memorial, the institution of the Lord's Supper was intended to perpetuate to all succeeding generations the authenticity of the record of the world's redemption by Jesus Christ. "Ye are my witnesses," said he, "of these things." Luke xxiv, 48. Witnesses they were. They had been with him in the garden. They had seen him upon the cross, fastened to it by nails driven in his hands and feet, and his side pierced by a soldier's spear. Their weeping eyes had looked upon him as he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. They had seen him, too, after he was risen from the dead—seen the wounds in his hands, and feet, and side. They had conversed and communed with him. They had received his commission to do the work he left them on earth to do, followed him out to the Mount of Olives, and there he was received up by a supernatural cloud out of their sight. These were

facts upon which rested the evidence that he was the promised Redeemer, the mediator of the new covenant; facts which left no doubt on their own minds, and facts which were necessary to be believed by all, in all coming time, who should receive him as their Redeemer and Saviour.

How, then, were they to be his witnesses of these things to generations to come? In any reasonable court they would have been received as accredited witnesses of the things they had seen and heard. But he left the testimony with them, to be conveyed and confirmed by them to all men in all coming ages. This they could do only by a perpetual memorial, so instituted as to contain in itself evidence of the truth and veracity of those whose testimony it was designed to communicate.

Let us then briefly examine the institution of the Supper, as a means of rendering the disciples witnesses of the facts on which are founded our faith in the atonement made for us by Jesus Christ.

This is a point of vast importance. To receive Jesus of Nazareth as the true Messiah, we must

be convinced that he was truly the Holy One of God predicted of by the prophets, and prefigured by the types and shadows under the law. He must be shown to us as the prophet to be raised up like unto Moses—greater than Moses—whose reproach or vicarious sufferings Moses by faith esteemed greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. He must appear the end of the law fo righteousness—the Lord our righteousness; not as a servant in the house of God, but as Lord over his own house. He must be brought before the mind as the true foundation on which all must build for heaven. With him the types, and shadows, and temple service of the old dispensation must cease, and a new and more spiritual worship be instituted. "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second." Heb. x, 9. All these things were, according to the Scriptures, to mark the bringing in of the new and better covenant. For the establishment of the New Testament, also, was the death of the testator necessary. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. ix, 12. "For where a

testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator." Heb. ix, 16. For a full and devout faith in the atonement—the facts in the history of redemption which assure us that Jesus Christ accomplished it upon the cross for us—and that he thus became the Head of the Church, which is his body, we need evidence to bring the whole subject near, declared as it were in our ears by living witnesses.

Let us then examine these witnesses, appointed for this very purpose by the Master; and the nature and sufficiency of their testimony to sustain the faith of succeeding generations.

After the Passover which he had kept with them, he took bread, and brake it, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you;" likewise also he took the cup, after supper, and gave it to them, saying, "This cup is my blood in the New Testament which is shed for you." The act was significant, as if he had said: "That which we have just celebrated is an ordinance of God, instituted as a memorial of the deliverance of his people out of Egyptian bondage. Up to this time it has been lawful, and the observance of it a duty binding upon all the house of Israel.

But this is the end. The fullness of time is come for the doing away of all these ceremonies of the law. Ye shall eat it no more. This, the ordinance I now institute, is *hereafter* to be observed by you in its stead, as a memorial of the abrogation of the ceremonies of the law, and the beginning of the Gospel in its form and fullness. It is designed to commemorate this event, and its introduction by my death upon the cross. All its virtue and efficacy is derived from my sacrificial offering of myself for the sins of many. The facts of my death and resurrection you shall shortly witness. The design and effect of those sufferings, in making atonement for a sinful world, I declare explicitly, in assuring you that my body is broken for you, and my blood shed for the remission of sins. These are facts to be believed and treasured up in the heart, in order to the obtaining of salvation through faith in my name. 'And ye are my witnesses of these things.' 'As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come.'"

With hearts full of love and zeal, they did everywhere bear witness to the things they had

seen and heard, and thousands credited their testimony and turned to the Lord.

But how, it will be inquired, does the institution of the sacrament become evidence of these things? By its being a means to perpetuate it through all succeeding time. It might have been perpetuated by tradition from generation to generation. But in that way it was liable to be corrupted by misapprehension of its terms and import, or a perversion of them. The precise acts and words of our Lord, presenting to the mind clearly and explicitly the sign, and the thing signified, would be subject to be altered by oral communications, so as to cease to designate the fact intended to be conveyed, as a basis of faith and devotion. But the institution of the Supper as a memorial of what Christ said and did, and also of the great things signified by this symbolic representation, habitually observed by the disciples and their successors, continued an unvarying monumental evidence of the truth of what the eye-witnesses observed.

The force and power of this kind of evidence to carry conviction to the understanding, is very clearly set forth by Mr. Leslie, in his "Short and

Easy Method with the Deists." "A matter of fact," he says, "however remote, is rendered incontestable by the following criteria: 1. That the *matter of fact* is such as men's senses, their *eyes* and *ears*, may judge of; 2. That it be done *publicly;* 3. That both public *monuments* be kept up in memory of it, and some *outward actions* be performed; 4. That such *monuments* and such *actions* or *observances* be instituted and do *commence* from the *time* that the *matter of fact* was done."

All these criteria exist in regard to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The things said and done were such as the disciples did see and hear. The record of them is precise and simple. The death of Christ, also, which he said they did show forth in this ordinance, they witnessed with equal demonstration. All these things were public and notorious. The ordinance of the Supper was instituted and commanded to be observed at the time of the occurrence, and for the declared purpose of perpetuating a memory of these things. And from that time to the present it has been publicly observed in the Churches, with the same profession always and everywhere, that its design is to show forth "the Lord's

death till he come." Of the facts of the sacred record, touching the redemption of the world by the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ at Jerusalem, more than eighteen hundred years ago, there can be no more incontestable evidence than the uninterrupted observance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper by Christians to the present time.

There is no fraud or collusion in it. Imposture is impossible. Look at the disciples, with the three thousand which were added to them on the day of Pentecost. They were baptized with the Holy Ghost, according to the promise of their risen Saviour, and "continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in *breaking of bread*, and in prayers." Acts ii, 42. Daily they continued with one accord in the temple, "and in *breaking bread* from house to house." Eusebius says they commemorated the body and blood of Christ daily. This they did openly in each other's houses when they came together for social and public worship. And always did they do it professedly in memory of Christ crucified and risen among them. This was their witness, before enemies as well as

friends, of the things they had seen and heard, and of their faith in the atonement made by Jesus Christ, as proven and confirmed by these things, showing forth the Lord's death as he had commanded them.

Could these be either deceived or deceivers? Deceived! How? Deceivers! How? The things they commemorated were of public notoriety. If they had not occurred, and so occurred as to be judged of by the senses, the eyes and ears of men, the delusion could and would have been detected and exposed at once. It could not have survived the first attack of its enemies. "That no such events," they would have said, "as you profess to commemorate, ever transpired at Jerusalem, all the people know."

Nor could the observance of this rite as a memorial of the story of the Saviour's sufferings, death, and resurrection; or of the ordinance instituted to be observed in commemoration of these things; or any change or modification of the record of them, or of the acts and words setting forth the design of that ordinance, ever have been introduced and brought into practice at any subsequent time. Whoever might have colluded

to do this would have been confuted by the testimony of all the people that no such custom as they affirmed to have been in practice, from the time of the events said to be commemorated, had existed, and the forgery would have defeated itself. The fact that this ordinance has been publicly observed in all the Christian world, and in every age of the Church's history, setting forth and alleging that it was instituted, and has been observed, to show forth the Lord's death till he come, is one of the most incontestable and convincing evidences of the authenticity of the sacred record, and the truth and divinity of our holy Christianity, which the codes of evidence can furnish. When we approach the Lord's table as communicants, and feel that we are following the holy apostles, early disciples, martyrs, and primitive saints, in their most holy acts of worship, and doing the very thing they did under the shadow of the cross, an easy exercise of faith brings us into close communion with these venerated worshipers. We seem almost intuitively to realize with them the Saviour's presence as if crucified among us. In our spirits we sympathize with him,

"As though we every one
Beneath his cross had stood;
And seen him heave, and heard him groan,
And felt his gushing blood."

The obligation of all Christians to receive the holy sacrament as often as they have opportunity, as a memorial, or in compliance with the Saviour's command, "This do in remembrance of me," is twofold.

First. It is a duty of every disciple to do his part promptly and punctually in sustaining and carrying forward the work which the whole Church was commissioned by the Master to do. When he went up into heaven to represent his militant Church there, he left his disciples on earth to represent him here. He would be preached by a living ministry, and therefore has chosen whom he would, and commissioned them "to go into all the world, and preach his Gospel to every creature." Mark xvi, 15. All who are brought to feel, as Paul was, that a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to them, realize the force of his declaration: "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, and woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." 1 Cor. ix, 16. But what is the reason of this strong obligation? Plainly, to carry into

effect the economy of spreading through the world, by human instrumentality, to the end of time, the Gospel of this salvation. And upon the faithfulness of these chosen instruments has been suspended, in a good degree from the beginning, the success of the Gospel and the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom.

But while this charge is committed to them in the aggregate, each individual is under the same obligation to do his part, as if the whole duty rested on him alone. Had one, appointed thereto, neglected the work of preaching the word, for the reason that the perpetuity of a living ministry could not be endangered by losing out of the mighty army to whom the commission is given *one only* like himself, all might for the same reason have done the same thing. Thus would the preaching of Christ crucified, the instrumentality which God has ordained in the economy of his grace to perpetuate the Gospel and its blessings in the world to the end of time, long ago have ceased. And who would have been responsible? Each one for himself. In this, as in everything else pertaining to personal religion and duty, "every one must give account of himself

to God." Rom. xiv, 12. And what an account will some be called to render! That wicked and slothful servant, whoever he may be, that has hid the talent committed to him, will be condemned and cast out. But there have always been those, though sometimes comparatively few, who have preached the word, been instant in season and out of season, and, constrained by the love of Christ, borne along the standard of their crucified Lord amid the darkness of error and superstition, and the terrors of bloody persecution, as though the duty and the glory of saving the kingdom of their Master from utter extinction in the world rested on them alone. Little as might seem the importance of the fidelity manifested by these faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ in fulfilling the command of their Lord, their own hearts acquitted them in the sight of God; and they are they who, through all the history of the Church, have prospered in their own souls, and been honored with success in winning souls to Christ. They are the burning and shining lights through whose luminous pathway the cross and its hallowing doctrines have been conveyed to us for our approval and acceptance. Happy men! to whom the Lord

will say in the last day, "Well done, good and faithful servants." Matt. xxv, 21.

Now let it be remembered that, precisely as our Lord has committed to his ministers the solemn charge to perpetuate the doctrines of the cross by the preaching of the word, so has he committed to all his followers the charge to do the same thing by an observance of the holy sacrament of the Supper. "As often as ye eat this bread," said he, "and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." "This do in remembrance of me." Was not this command as explicit as that given to his ministers, to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature? And it is enjoined upon every individual who names the name of Christ. Who can evade its force? Who that slights or neglects the solemn duty it enjoins can answer for it before God more than for breaking the command, "Thou shalt do no murder?" Solemn thought! But it is God's truth. We shall be judged by it in a coming day.

But the duty is a reasonable one, and, if rightly understood, will be esteemed by the truly pious rather a privilege than a duty. The sub-

stance of this ordinance is, as we have seen, to show the Lord's death till he come. The same this as the preaching of the word. To perpetuate it pure from the fountain there must be an uninterrupted succession of testimony, rendering imposture or innovation impossible from the beginning. To secure this the blessed Redeemer deposited the sacred trust with his followers, and instituted the sacrament to enable them to discharge it. But to do this they must witness for him in a faithful and habitual observance of this ordinance. Is it not a privilege as well as a duty to have part, and each one the individual part assigned him, in this glorious scheme of sustaining the great doctrines of the atonement in the world, and conveying them down to future generations with a force of evidence that confounds infidelity and inspires the sincere with unwavering confidence? As the perpetuity of this faith-inspiring evidence rests wholly upon the fidelity of Christians to sustain this ordinance, as a memorial of Christ's passion and death, the duty to do so is commensurate with the importance of a continuance of this help to our faith in the Church and the world.

Do any reason with themselves that the Church always has done this, and probably always will, though they as individuals may neglect it? Let such remember that the command is as directly to them as to those who do conscientiously observe it. It is given to all, and is equally binding on all. If others should reason in the same way, and do as *they* do, then would the current of evidence be cut off from the fountain, and this glorious means of salvation be annihilated forever. As I have said before, the obligation is binding equally upon every individual member of the Church, as truly and really as if the entire consequence of its being observed or neglected by all were suspended upon him alone. Let every Christian think of this—think for what purpose the Master said to all and each one of his followers, "This do in remembrance of me," and decide, as before the Lord—who, the same night in which he was betrayed, uttered the solemn injunction—whether he can turn away with indifference from this ordinance and not sin against God.

But I said, rightly understood, to the pious believer it is an exalted privilege. Deep piety is

always accompanied with a desire to do good. It is self-stimulating. "Did not our heart burn within us?" said the disciples to whom he revealed himself in the breaking of bread after his resurrection, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Luke xxiv, 32. All truly devout Christians have felt the same. They felt it when they were converted. The language of their hearts was,

> "O for a thousand tongues, to sing
> My great Redeemer's praise."

The same faith and love fill the soul at all times with the same ardent desire to confess Christ before men, by proclaiming the Saviour's love to a dying world. It bursts forth like an unquenchable flame in the irrepressible language of the poet:

> "My gracious Master, and my God,
> Assist me to proclaim,
> To spread through all the earth abroad
> The honors of thy name."

It is this spirit of love and zeal which always accompanies a lively state of religious experience, that induces many pious young men to think

they have a call to preach, because it is in its nature and tendency the same. "The love of Christ constraineth us," said Paul. "The love of Christ constraineth us," responds every truly devoted Christian. Thus, in the class-meeting, in the love-feast, in the social prayer or conference meeting, in such language as they can command, the learned and the unlearned are wont to proclaim the Saviour's love in dying for a world of sinners—dying for *them*. Nothing gives them more inward satisfaction than thus to confess Christ and proclaim his love. They feel that he approves of it and blesses them in it.

Now, Christian brethren, listen for a moment to the words of truth touching your privilege in this matter. Your blessed Lord and Master has provided, in the institution of the sacrament, means by which you may regularly and most effectually preach Christ and him crucified to a dying world. Not indeed in the same manner as the preacher, who, by the institution of the ministry, is appointed to publish the Gospel message by preaching the word; but still as effectually, and with less liability of presenting it with admixtures of error or deteriorating elements of any kind.

The subject matter of the message, as indicated by the terms in which the Saviour has settled and fixed it in the sacred text, is "Christ and him crucified;" "Christ in you the hope of glory." This is the one concentrated idea that the message conveys. It admits of no interpolation by the aberrations of human thought and human fancy. There it stands, the substance of Gospel truth, open, explicit, and all-powerful to convince the understanding, awaken the conscience, and assure the humble believer of the sufficiency of the atonement to save the soul from sin and death. Think of this as at the sacred altar you receive the symbols of the death of Him who died for you and rose again. Think that in partaking of this ordinance you are preaching Christ as really as if you were in the sacred desk expounding the word. Think, too, that you are preaching him in the very way he has directed, and therefore the best way. No words you can utter, under the strongest impulse of feeling, to proclaim his goodness and love, can be so acceptable to him, or so effectually accomplish your largest desire to promote his glory and the salvation of souls, as this silent preaching

at his altar, expressed in the way he has prescribed.

Moreover, consider the usual effect of this silent preaching of God's people at the sacramental altar. Sometimes, under the preaching of the word, there are sensible manifestations of feeling in the audience; it may be the result of the eloquence and power of the preacher; and it may be, and often is, the spirit of God attending the word to the hearts and consciences of the people. You have witnessed, too, impulses of feeling, perhaps among the wicked, when simple-hearted Christian men and women have spoken before them of the things of God, and witnessed a good profession for Christ their Saviour. But never did a company of sincere Christians come to the Lord's table, and there, in the spirit of devotion, receive the sacred symbols of his passion and death as he has commanded, without a general solemnity upon all minds, spectators as well as communicants, such as is not usual ordinarily under the preaching of the word. And were this ordinance universally observed by Christians, and observed in that spirit of deep and ardent piety which fits the communicant to

profit by it himself, how much greater this effect upon others would be, who can tell? Who, indeed, can tell how much of the religious sentiment, the seriousness and reflection, and the inward conviction of the necessity of salvation through faith in the atonement, which have obtained a permanent lodgment in the hearts and feelings of the unconverted who mingle in our assemblies, and on the subjects of our prayers and solicitudes, is received through the means of witnessing the solemn profession made by Christ's disciples in this memorial of his death? Is it not then a privilege thus to proclaim the Lamb of God to sinners in the way God has appointed? And is it not a duty, too, since he has commanded it? Let all who profess to love Christ and his cause think of these things and lay them up in their hearts.

But the command, "This do in remembrance of me," conveys another distinct and most impressive idea. It is the language of friendship to endeared friends on occasion of being separated from them. This do for the love I have for you, and you for me, that it may be kept alive by frequently calling to mind the cause

which has produced it. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John iv, 10. "We love Him, because he first loved us." 1 John iv, 19.

It supposes some gift bestowed, to be kept as a memento, and often looked upon by the receiver, as a means, by a law of association, of reviving in the mind a remembrance of the friend who gave it; or something to be done, as directed by that friend, producing the same effect. Such a token has all the power of bringing up in the contemplative mind the absent friend, and of reviving the sentiments and sympathies which his presence and excellences inspire, that a real reunion of the parties would occasion. Hence the practice has been common in all ages of the world.

A young man was taught the fear of God by his pious mother—the only being he ever learned to love. But he did love her ardently, tenderly. Death separated her from him. On her bed of death she gave him a trifling memento, and said to him: "My son, I have nothing of value to give you, only what I have given, the prayers

and counsels of a mother. Take this, and keep it as a token of my affection; and whenever you look upon it remember me." He soon forgot his mother, neglected the memento of her affection, and gave himself up to a course of dissipation and crime. Justice overtook him. It found him hardened in sin. In his cell he was obdurate and unfeeling. No chord could be touched to awaken in him a sense of guilt or shame. With oaths and imprecations he defied the law and the officers of justice. He turned away with equal disdain from friends who sought him out to administer to his comfort. Shocked at the daring impiety of his unfeeling heart, they sighed and departed. There was no relenting in his bosom. Every avenue seemed closed up to a tender thought or virtuous emotion. But the adamant was smitten, dissolved, and melted. His mother's memento, which had been neglected among his cast-off articles, was brought out and presented to him. He was overwhelmed with emotion. The great deep of his soul was broken up. He was subdued, and wept and sobbed; and in broken accents he exclaimed, "O my mother! my dear mother! I

see her, I see her as she lay upon her dying bed, and told me to take that and remember her. O! if I had remembered her; if I had remembered her love, and prayers, and counsels, I should have been preserved from this evil hour." But that mother could not save, could not help him.

Jesus our dying Lord has left us a memento—the sacrament—as a remembrancer of him. "This do," said he, "in remembrance of me." He is not only our friend, but our *Saviour*, and as such we are directed to remember him. Cold must that heart be which is not inflamed with an ardent desire to fulfill to the uttermost this dying injunction of the Redeemer of the world.

But we must take a more particular view of this injunction of our Lord in order to make a right and profitable application of it. We can readily understand how the disciples, who were present with him, heard him utter the command, and witnessed his passion and death, would realize the nature and intent of the duty enjoined, and fulfill it with all the deep feeling that the circumstances were calculated to inspire. But how can we, removed centuries from

the scenes of that memorable night, who did not see, or hear, or feel, what they saw, and heard, and felt—how can we remember him in this ordinance, as they were commanded to remember him?

How? By faith; by a realizing faith. In no other way can it be done. In this way it may be, it is done. Let none mistake here. All faith is not realizing faith. A mere mental belief in the record of Christ's sufferings and death is faith—faith that is necessary to salvation, but not the realizing faith which brings salvation into the soul. The merely nominal believer acknowledges the truth of the sacred history, that the man, Christ Jesus, was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, and that he rose again from the dead on the third day, and ascended into heaven. All this he steadfastly believes, and this is all. He has no sense of his guilt as a sinner, and therefore none of his need of a saviour. He has no interest in Christ crucified. In such a state he is not qualified to understand the import of the command, "This do in remembrance of me." He has nothing of

interest to remember. The record of Christ's sufferings he has admitted as true, just like any other well authenticated historical record; and he feels no personal interest or benefit in calling it up to remembrance by any means other than the record itself. Indeed, we cannot well conceive how a person with no higher or more lively faith in Christ, can in any just sense *remember him.* But more than this is implied in the requirement, "This do in remembrance of me." Let no communicant suppose that he has fulfilled the command of Christ, if he receive the holy sacrament merely in remembrance of the historical fact that Christ was crucified at Jerusalem, as the Scriptures testify. He does not remember him at all in the sense of the command. As well might he communicate in remembrance of the promise made to Abraham, or the introduction of the Gospel to the Gentiles by the preaching of Peter. Here there is no realizing, appropriating faith; no soul-stirring reality to be recalled by a remembrance of Him.

This merely intellectual belief is, indeed, sometimes accompanied by strong impulses of feeling. We naturally sympathize with the

suffering victim of cruelty. A tragical scene presented to the mind in a way to take sudden possession of it, at once brings all the tender emotions of our nature into action, and we feel and weep, and scarcely know why. Fiction itself has this power over us, when there is not a particle of faith in the reality of the things represented. Is it any wonder, then, that men and women who believe in the truth of the record of Christ's sufferings should be moved with sympathy when, by any means, those sufferings are brought vividly before their minds? It is somewhere stated, that while an eloquent divine was portraying the sufferings of Christ, and the audience were absorbed and melted to tears, an officer of high rank drew his sword, and audibly exclaimed, "O if I had been there!" He was an infidel of the French school. The same result might have been produced had the martyrdom of Stephen been the theme of discourse. They had no faith which made Christ to them anything more than an object of sympathy. Recalling the scene of his sufferings every day, by any means, would not produce in them a single devotional feeling.

Precisely here communicants are most liable to be deceived. They meditate upon Christ's sufferings until their feelings are overwhelmed with the view they have of them; and they leave the table of the Lord in a state of mind which they mistake for increased devotion and spirituality. They need a warning voice to admonish them of the danger of this delusive snare. Let them not be flattered with a belief that they have fulfilled the requirement of the Lord, "This do in remembrance of me," or shared in the grace he imparts to those who truly and devoutly do this, if they have had no higher faith than a mere belief in the reality of his sufferings, no other feeling than a keen sympathy for him as an innocent sufferer.

If we have received Christ by faith, we have had a realizing sense of his power and grace, as our atoning Redeemer, to save us from sin. It was at the moment our faith beheld him on the cross, crucified for us and for the world, that we felt the evidence of pardon and peace with God through him. Such is the experience of all who are truly converted to God. It was then that Christ crucified became the object of the heart's

supreme affections. His image was impressed upon it. He was the joy and the song of our new-born souls by day and by night. Like Job, we could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," Job xix, 25; or, in the language of the spouse, "This is my beloved, and this is my friend." Cant. v, 16. With David, we exclaimed, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Ps. lxxiii, 25. No object was so lovely, none so endeared to the heart, as the suffering Saviour, seen by faith upon the cross. It was his love, manifested by his passion and death, that rendered him supremely lovely to the believing heart. "Unto you which believe he is precious." 1 Peter ii, 7. Precious in his blood-stained vesture! Precious as a lamb that was slain! It was then, Christians, that you were enabled to glory in the cross. It was then that you felt that you were "not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ." 1 Peter i, 18. It was then that you discerned the Lord's body, in which he bore our sins. Jesus Christ and him crucified was all in all to you. Your faith grasped all, appropriated all, and your soul

was filled with peace and joy, while you steadfastly looked upon him, and beheld in him your reconciled Saviour.

Thus were you brought to "know Him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death." Phil. iii, 10. And while your faith was active, you had the same lively impression of his image and his loveliness. It was in that state he would have you always live. But he knows our weakness, knows how liable we are to have our minds drawn off from a contemplation of himself and his gracious dealings with us, and thus lose our first love, as the Ephesians did, by losing sight of the object of our faith.

As a means of keeping our faith and love alive and active, he has instituted this memorial of his death, and commanded us to observe it. Such was its design, and such is its tendency. In the simple act of receiving the broken bread and the consecrated wine, we have a symbolical representation of his broken body and shed blood. It is the memorial he himself ordained; and, as a portrait of a departed friend, presents him to the mind just as our faith apprehended him

when we were enabled to receive him as our Redeemer and Saviour. The sign and the thing signified act and react upon each other, as our love increases or grows cold. When our hearts are animated with a sense of the love of Christ, and the glories of the cross fill our souls with delight, we take pleasure in often recurring to the symbol of his death and passion as a means of keeping alive these heavenly emotions; and in so doing we find our faith strengthened, and our love and joy increased. But if we permit the world to enter in and steal away our affections from our crucified Redeemer, our delight in his ordinances will also abate, and our danger of entire apostasy will be significantly indicated by our indifference to both the sign and the thing signified.

CHAPTER V.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A PASSOVER.

THE Lord's Supper is, by common consent, among Christians, a substitute for the paschal supper under the law. It was instituted immediately after our Lord had eaten that supper for the last time with his disciples. In close connection with that as a memorial of the deliverance of God's people from their bondage in Egypt, he instituted his own ordinance, and commands that it should be kept in remembrance of him to the end of time.

Among the resembling circumstances common to the Jewish and Christian passover, Dr. Waterland, according to Dr. Clarke, embraces the following: "1. The Passover was of *divine* appointment, and so was the Eucharist. 2. The Passover was a *sacrament*, and so was the Eucharist, 3. The Passover was a *memorial* of a great deliverance from temporal bondage; the Eucharist is a *memorial* of a *greater* deliverance

from *spiritual* bondage. 4. The Passover *pre-figured* the death of Christ before it was accomplished; the Eucharist *represents*, or *figures* out, that death now past. 5. The Passover was a kind of *fœderal* rite between God and man; so is the Eucharist, as it points out the blood of the sacrifice offered for the ratification of the covenant between God and man."

The passover was a solemn and interesting rite with the Jews. The pious Israelites observed it with a religious awe and veneration, which told how deeply they felt all that it was instituted to impress upon their minds and keep alive in their hearts. It was a perpetual monument of the miraculous deliverance of their fathers from a cruel bondage; and it was a sign of God's covenant with his people, that the blood of sprinkling, truly received and trusted in, was a sure protection from the death incurred by sin.

The events which the passover commemorated were eminently calculated to fill the minds of the devout worshipers of the true God with sentiments of deep and ardent devotion. Pharoah, the head and representative of the proud and idolatrous Egyptians, openly and blasphe-

mously denied God, saying to Moses, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice, and let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." Exod. v, 2. He hardened his heart against God and his people, until he brought upon himself swift destruction, first in the visitation of the angel commissioned to slay the first-born of all the land of Egypt in one night, and then in the destruction of himself and his armed hosts in the Red Sea. On the evening of that dreadful night, when the destroying angel was commissioned to slay Egypt's first-born, Moses, by the command of God, "called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out, and take you a lamb, according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side-posts with the blood that is in the bason: and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to

come in unto your houses to smite you. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshiped." Exod. xii, 21-27.

As a memorial simply of the deliverance of God's people from temporal bondage, the Jewish passover may be of little consequence to the Christian communicant, other than to confirm his faith in the power and goodness of God to protect and defend those who put their trust in him at all times. But in other respects it is interesting, deeply interesting. The Jews themselves considered it a *sacrificial rite;* and Christians agree that it was a *type* of the great and glorious things which the Lord's Supper, substituted in its place, was instituted to commemorate. This view

of it is sustained by the Scriptures. "The Lamb of God," to the ear of a pious Jew, was a term of thrilling import. When John saw Jesus coming unto him, and cried out to the multitude of his listening hearers, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," (John i, 29,) the glorious proclamation met a warm response in the living sentiment that the services of the altar had wrought into the moral being of the believing Israelites, who waited for the salvation of the Lord, as predicted by Moses and the prophets, and typified in the ordinances of the sanctuary. Again, when John saw Jesus walking he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God!" John i, 36. This was no new designation of the expected Messiah, which needed explanation to be understood by the people who heard him. They expected in their Messiah a *redeemer*—a *deliverer*. They looked for the antitype of the types, and the subject of the predictions of their prophets; and no term so naturally stirred their inmost souls, in the stretch of their desire for the advent of the Messiah, as LAMB! LAMB OF GOD! which was associated in their thoughts with the paschal lamb, the well-understood type of their

promised Redeemer. Though some, through their unbelief, understood not the import of these declarations of John, others did. Andrew and his companion caught the inspiration and followed Jesus. Dwelling with him for a season, they were assured in their hearts that he was indeed the Lamb of God; and Andrew hastened to proclaim to Simon, his brother, "We have found the Messiah." John i, 41. Philip too was brought to know him; and in ecstasy he exclaimed to Nathaniel, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write." John i, 45. Did write? yes, always so write as to show him "the *Lamb—the Lamb of God!*"

The lamb, as a sacrificial offering for sin in the stead of the guilty sinner, was so incorporated into their traditional faith, and luminous in the symbols of their worship and the teachings of their prophets, that the hearts of the pious Jews were prepared to hail the appearance of the "Lamb of God" as the advent of their Redeemer, imperfect as were their views of the nature of the deliverance he came to procure for them. It was certainly from a knowledge of a well understood patriarchal faith and usage that Isaac said

to Abraham, "My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the *lamb* for a *burnt-offering?*" Gen. xxii, 7. In the response of Abraham, "My son, God will provide himself a LAMB for a *burnt-offering*," there is a manifestation of the same truth. The patriarchs worshiped by sacrifice, and the victim was a lamb, as these expressions of Isaac and Abraham indicate. But a clearer indication of God's acceptance of the typical lamb in the stead of sinful man, appears in his providing one to be offered in sacrifice in the place of Isaac. Here righteousness and peace embraced each other! Sinful man, whom the righteousness of the law condemned to death, was spared, and an innocent victim was accepted in his stead. "Abraham believed, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Rom. iv, 3.

But this was only a type of the availing sacrifice. So the patriarch viewed it. Through it he was enabled to look to the true offering which God had promised, "as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world." In this was fulfilled the saying of our Lord to the Jews: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." John viii, 56.

These rays of light, typically indicating the Redeemer of the world as a *lamb* to be offered in sacrifice unto God, were concentrated in the ordinance of the passover, so as to cast a perfect picture upon the page of the Gospel. The institution was divinely appointed, to be observed perpetually until the coming in of a better dispensation. The manner of observing it was particularly prescribed and strictly enjoined. And in all, the *lamb* was present to the eye, and in the mind of the worshiping people, as the offering alone acceptable to God. The faithful, like Abraham, trusted not in the sacrifice, as possessing any merit in itself, to atone for sin, but looked through it as a type to the Lamb of God, who in the fullness of time should come. How great was their joy, then, when they heard John, whom all men held to be a prophet, proclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!"

It was in the passover that God's ancient people celebrated the dying love of the Redeemer of the world, through the type which was ordained, as in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper we are required to do. The two ordinances were

instituted for the same purpose; the one looking forward to his passion and death to be experienced; the other recognizing him as having suffered upon the cross for our sins, according to the Scriptures.

It may be profitable for the Christian communicant here to fix in his mind the circumstances that characterized the Jewish passover, which the Saviour preserved essentially in the institution of the Eucharist. It will help to show in what light the Christian ordinance is to be considered as a passover; or rather, what, that is peculiar to the passover, should possess his mind and affect his heart when he approaches the table of the Lord. Dr. Waterland, as quoted by Dr. Clarke, says:

"1. In the paschal supper the master of the house *took bread*, and *gave thanks to God*, who had provided it for the sustenance of man. Our Lord copied the circumstance precisely in the institution of the Eucharist. 2. It was also a custom for the master of the house to *break* the *bread*, either before or after the benediction offered to God; that our Lord copied this custom every reader knows. 3. The master of the house *dis-*

tributed the broken bread, for it does not appear that the family were permitted to take it themselves; so our Lord, after having broken the bread, gave it to the disciples, saying, *Take, eat*, etc. 4. In the paschal feast the master was accustomed to *take a cup* of wine, and pronounce a benediction to God, or thanksgiving over it, after which it was termed *the cup of blessing*. To this circumstance St. Paul particularly alludes when he says, '*The cup of blessing* which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?' 1 Cor. x, 16. 5. At the institution of the passover it was said, '*The blood shall be to you for a token* upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood I will pass over you,' etc. Exod. xii, 13. The blood was a *token* or *sign* of the *covenant*, or agreement, then made between God and them, and ratified partly by pouring out the blood of the paschal lamb, and partly by feeding on the flesh of this sacrifice. In the institution of the Eucharist our Lord says: '*This cup is the new covenant in my blood*, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins.' The *cup*, here, is put for the wine; and *covenant* is put for the *token* or *sign* of the *cove-*

nant. The *wine*, as representing Christ's *blood*, answers to the blood of the *passover*, which was typical of the blood of our Lord; and the *remission of sins* here answers to the *passing over* there, and *preserving* from *death.* 6. At the paschal feast there was a *declaration* of the great things which God had done for the people; and our Lord makes use of the Eucharist to declare and point out the great mercy of God in our redemption, for it shows forth the Lord's death (and, consequently, all the benefits to be derived from it) till he himself shall come to judge the world. 7. At the paschal solemnity they were accustomed to sing a hymn of praise to God; and this part of their conduct our Lord and his disciples exactly copied: 'And when they had *sung a hymn* they departed,' etc.

"The many *resembling* circumstances, real and verbal, abundantly show that the *holy Eucharist* was, in a great measure, copied from the *paschal feast*, and was intended to *supply its place*, only heightening the design and improving the application."

Thus we see how the idea of the passover is interwoven into the sacrament of the Lord's Sup-

per, and constitutes an essential part of it. Both were designed to impress upon the mind, by visible representations, the great atonement made by Jesus Christ upon the cross, and its sufficiency and acceptance as a ground of pardon for guilty sinners. "He was delivered for our offenses." He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree." "He humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross." "He was wounded for our transgression, bruised for our iniquities." "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter." "Christ our PASSOVER is *sacrificed* for us." The great and glorious truth set forth in these and similar declarations of Scripture, contains the substance of the Gospel. Without it the whole would be a dead letter; nay, more, it would be a death-warrant to a world of guilty sinners. As "the wages of sin," so the end of the unpardoned sinner, "is *death*." Our only hope is the salvation of the Gospel; and salvation is offered to us only through the merits of our crucified Redeemer and Saviour. "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name given under

heaven among men whereby we must be saved." Acts iv, 12.

"Man is naturally a dull and heedless creature, especially in spiritual things, and has need of the utmost assistance of his *senses*, in union with those expressive rites and ceremonies which the Holy *Scripture*, not *tradition*, has sanctioned, in order to enable him to arrive at spiritual things through the medium of earthly similitudes."*

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper, considered as a passover, is eminently suggestive of those vital truths which meet the condition of a sinful creature in his approach to God, to assure him of grace and salvation on the simple terms of faith in the blood of atonement, and to reassure him of the glorious benefits of this rich provision every time that he turns from the busy cares of the world, or any other cause of his forgetfulness of God and his great salvation, to receive a fresh impression of their power and efficacy, through the medium of the symbols by which they are represented.

We cannot dwell too much upon this feature of the institution. It should at all times fill our

*Dr. Adam Clarke.

minds and engage our hearts. We ought to understand it clearly, fully; to dwell upon it in our meditations, and cherish it in all our thoughts; for in this consists our fitness for communion, namely, "discerning the Lord's body." To eat and drink, without a right perception of the ordinance *as a passover*, is to eat and drink unworthily, "*not* discerning the Lord's body." Such is the judgment of the apostle Paul.

We turn then to the passover. What does it suggest touching our salvation by the atonement? Here let there be no wandering into the regions of fancy. Let the imagination be held in chains. All is of God. All is of divine appointment, and has a bearing upon the great end—our salvation from sin and death, and ultimate enjoyment of God in heaven.

The institution of the *sacrificial offering* of the lamb sets forth, first, the righteousness of God in inflicting *death* upon man, as the penalty for sin. The death of the first-born of Egypt was an exhibition of the righteous judgment of God. Death followed sin into the world; and death must ever follow it as its consequence and

penalty, if it be not pardoned by the righteous Lawgiver on terms which he can approve. None realize this as do those who have the fear of God upon them, and just views of his holiness and justice. In their consciences they "consent to the law, that it is holy, just, and good." They feel that the sentence of death is written against the unredeemed sinner. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. xviii, 4. Sin and holiness can never dwell together. Sin separates the soul from a holy God, and contains in itself the principle of that death which is banishment "from his presence and the glory of his power." 2 Thes. i, 9. Sin excluded angels from heaven, and they are held, as a just penalty, "in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6. O the deep, soul-destroying power of sin! How it dishonors God, by effacing his image from the creatures he has made, and implanting in them a nature which "is enmity against him." And how can God be reconciled with sin, or with the sinful beings whose "carnal mind is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be?" Rom. viii, 7. He cannot. The judgment and the conscience de-

clare he cannot. The righteousness of the law must be fulfilled in the sinner, or a substitute. Death must be inflicted, or the sinner pardoned; God's holiness and justice must be vindicated. All were in the condemnation. Before the righteous Judge every mouth is stopped, and all the world becomes guilty. Hence the necessity of a *sacrificial* offering for sin, or the infliction of the death-penalty upon the sinner.

Abel was influenced by a conviction of this truth, when he presented as an offering to God, not the fruit of the ground, as infidel Cain did, but of the firstlings of his flock, and poured out its life upon the altar of sacrifice. It was believed and felt as the living truth of God by all the patriarchs, who presented their sacrificial offerings unto the Lord in like manner.

In offering up Isaac, Abraham yielded to the inmost conviction of his soul, that God was righteous in exacting what he would, even the life of sinful man. The whole system of Jewish sacrifices, and particularly that of the Passover, speaks the same language: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. xviii, 4. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." Heb. ix, 22.

Again, the passover suggests the mercy of God in providing for the salvation of a guilty world through the atonement. This is the substance of the glad tidings of great joy to all people, which the angels proclaimed to the shepherds of Judea, when the Saviour was born. In the day when Adam was excluded from Eden, and stood before his Judge guilty and condemned, waiting with fear and trembling to hear the sentence of death pronounced against him, he was surprised and overwhelmed with the announcement that a remedy was provided, which he evidently understood to be a promise that in the fullness of time, as it is expressed by the apostle Paul, God would send forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might become the sons of God. Nor was it less evident to him that this redemption was to be wrought out by sacrifice, by the death of the Redeemer. To testify his faith in the validity of this promise, and keep the truth of it alive in his heart, he ceased not to offer sacrifices, typifying, in the light of the promise,

"The Lamb for sinners slain."

Abel, too, and all the patriarchs, offered sacrifices which indicated their faith in the atonement by the sacrificial offering of the promised Redeemer. These all died in faith, not having witnessed, in its literal fulfillment, the glorious event typified by their offerings. The Israelites, on the eve of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, were commanded to offer up a lamb for each family, in remembrance of the mercy of God in sparing their first-born, when those of the Egyptians were slain. This institution was called a *passover*, because God's angel passed over their houses when he carried death and misery into the habitations of their unbelieving and wicked oppressors. This deliverance of the obedient people of God, upon their offering the sacrifice he required, by humble faith in his word, assured them of his acceptance of the offering it typified, as an atonement for sin, and a ground of their salvation from the death denounced against them by the law.

Again, the circumstances attending the institution of the passover pointed out, more clearly than all former sacrifices, the glorious atonement made by Jesus Christ upon the cross. The

victim to be sacrificed was to be a lamb of the first year, without blemish; showing, typically, that the redemption of *guilty man* required the death of an *innocent sufferer;* that our iniquities were laid upon the innocent Lamb of God, who was without blemish, "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Heb. vii, 26. This transaction also implied a *covenant*, by which God engaged to deliver and save his people, who by faith obediently kept his ordinances. This covenant was ratified by the blood of sprinkling. "They shall take the blood, and strike it on the two side-posts, and on the upper door-post of the houses wherein they shall eat it. . . . And the blood shall be for you a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you." Exod. xii, 7–13. This sacrificial act, the sprinkling of the blood of the victim, was the seal of the covenant, and without it there was no promise that God would spare the Israelites more than the Egyptians, though the lamb should be slain as it was commanded. This was clearly typical, and designed to show that to be saved from death

by the atonement made for us by Jesus Christ, we must have an application of the blood of Christ made to our hearts and consciences, through faith in his name.

The lamb was slain, and the blood sprinkled, not only upon the side-posts and lintels of the houses, as a token of God's covenant to those within, but in after times by the priests upon the altars of the sanctuary; and the lamb was then hung up and flayed, and afterward roasted on a fixture resembling a cross, and the flesh eaten by the household for whom it was offered in sacrifice, thus impressing upon the minds and hearts of the pious, who worshiped God in this ordinance, a distinct image of the antitype, the Lamb of God, when he should be offered up upon the cross for the sins of the world.

It was commanded, too, that the strictest ceremonial purity should be observed in connection with this ordinance; nothing fermented with leaven was to be used during the feast; all leaven was to be removed from the houses of the people, and a person ceremonially unclean in any way was disqualified to celebrate this ordinance; showing, as St. Paul explains it, the

necessity of sincerity of heart and purity of motive, in commemorating the death of our blessed Redeemer for us.

In a word, the passover, and all the circumstances attending it, so clearly point out the sacrificial offering of Christ upon the cross for our redemption, that the people of God, under the dispensation to which it belonged, were enabled to see all that was essential in that transaction to secure the benefits of it in the salvation of their souls, through the type, as Christians are in looking upon the transaction itself as past. Hence the fitness of copying, by our Lord, the essential features of the ordinance of the passover in the institution of the Eucharist, as a memorial to show forth his death till he shall come to judge the world.

Here is the wisdom of God. All that is vital, and glorious, and life-giving in Christ our Saviour, is so concentrated in the designation, "Lamb of God," that the simple use of that term brings into the soul of the humble believer the fullness of the blessed Gospel, in all its power and glory. Recognized by his devout followers as possessing in himself the fullness of all that was typified by

the paschal offering of the Jews, as a LAMB, he was more often spoken of, thought of, worshiped, praised, and adored, than in any other character employed in the sacred Scriptures to designate him, in his office work as a Saviour. For this the typical services of the altar prepared the hearts of the people. When John proclaimed to the Jews, "Behold the Lamb of God," all pious hearts were prepared to respond:

> "All hail, the power of Jesus' name!
> Let angels prostrate fall;
> Bring forth the royal diadem,
> And crown him Lord of all."

Peter, who, after John's proclamation, followed Jesus with the earnestness which characterized his lively faith in the atonement, says to the saints who had been brought to a knowledge of God, "through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," (1 Pet. i, 2:) "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a LAMB without blemish and without spot." 1 Pet. i, 19. Here

is so clear a reference to the paschal lamb that none can mistake it. The ordinance required that the paschal offering should be without blemish and without spot, that it might faithfully represent the glorious antitype in Christ Jesus the Lord. In heaven, too, the glory of his redeeming power is revealed before admiring angels, through his glorified person, "as a LAMB that was slain." Rev. v, 12. "I beheld," said the enraptured John, "and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a LAMB as it had been slain." Rev. v, 6. "The four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the LAMB; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wert slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Rev. v, 8, 9.

The multitude round about the throne, "the angels," "the four beasts," and "the elders," "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," cried with a loud voice, saying, "Worthy is the LAMB that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying," exclaimed John, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the LAMB, forever and ever." Rev. v, 12, 13. To him "every knee shall bow." As a lamb slain for them, he is most terrible to the wicked. While the righteous shall sing, "Unto Him that hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory and dominion forever and ever;" the wicked, "who have trampled upon the blood of the covenant," and "done despite to the spirit of grace," will call for "mountains and rocks to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the LAMB." Rev. vi, 16. Are the redeemed in heaven distinguished as "arrayed in white robes?" They "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the LAMB." Rev. vii, 14. Do they appear crowned with laurels, as conquerors of a vanquished foe? "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." Rev. xii, 11. Do they "stand upon the sea of

glass mingled with fire, having gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name?" With the harps of God in their hands, "they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the LAMB." Rev. xv, 2, 3. This is a harmonious song. It is salvation unto God and the LAMB. Salvation through the blood of atonement, prefigured by the paschal offering under the Mosaic dispensation, and fulfilled in the passion and death of Christ, who offered himself once without spot unto God, as a satisfactory atonement for a guilty world.

What a world of meaning there is in that word, "LAMB"—"LAMB OF GOD!" It carries thought back to the first promise of a Redeemer in the garden, and forward to the halleluiahs of the redeemed in heaven, around the eternal throne. It concentrates, in the reflection of a moment, the whole living truth of God's revelation to man, bearing upon his salvation. The atonement, the sprinkling of blood, expiation of guilt, and purification from defilement, victory over sin and eternal deliverance from its penalty, all come up into the mind, as the result of the

offering of the Lamb of God as a sacrifice for us. What then can be more appropriate, and what more interesting to dwell upon in our thoughts, than that this simple means of reflecting such a flood of living light upon our souls, as in a moment, should be constituted an essential part of the sacrament, as it is when viewed in the light of a passover? The broken body and shed blood of the crucified Redeemer, represented by the symbols of the broken bread and the wine poured out, as prescribed by the Saviour, as typified by the offering of the paschal lamb under the law, furnish the devout recipient of these symbols a most lively view of the great atonement made for him, and the spiritual benefits he may derive from it. If he be in the right frame of spirit; if his heart and mind be abstracted from the world, as they should be, what a feast to the soul may he enjoy here. All absorbed in pious meditation upon the glorious truths thus brought before him, he feels as in the immediate presence of his God, beholding his wondrous work in man's salvation. He is subdued, and his heart melted, at the thought that this was done for *him;* though it cost the

blood and life of the Son of God, it was done for *him*, and for all the world. As by faith he views the atoning victim upon the cross, he is led to exclaim:

> "O the Lamb, the bleeding Lamb!
> The Lamb on Calvary;
> The Lamb was slain, but liveth again,
> To intercede for *me!*"

There is another idea, suggested by the paschal character of the Lord's Supper, which communicants may profitably consider. The passover was a sacrifice and the seal of a covenant. God covenanted to spare the first-born of the Israelites, only on condition that they should observe the ordinance obediently, and with faith in him, and cause the sprinkling of the blood of the victim to be made, in all respects, as he commanded them. By this were the parties bound in covenant, and neglect on the part of the people to fulfill all that was required, being a violation of the covenant, was attended by a forfeiture of the blessings promised. In the perpetuity of it, God covenanted to be their God, and they to be his people. It was on this wise that they entered into covenant with God by sacrifice:

The offerings being made, "Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold, the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." Exod. xxiv, 6–8. This was the blood of the Old Testament. Of the wine which Christ poured out and gave to his disciples to drink, representing his own precious blood, he said: "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." Matt. xxvi, 28.

Though the sacrament is not a *sacrifice*, it *represents* a sacrifice, even the sacrifice of the blood of Christ; and we are required to receive it in the spirit of sacrifice, giving ourselves away wholly unto him. Even this offering can be acceptable only by being sprinkled with the blood of the covenant. This we must have to profit by the ordinance. But how great is the blessing it conveys, accompanied by the blood of sprink-

ling! It is more than a mere formal act of external worship. It is a feast of fat things to the soul. It has the covenant promise of a covenant-keeping God to minister spiritual comfort and edification to the penitent, believing recipient. Why may we not then, with good hope of receiving a positive blessing, "draw near with faith, and receive this holy sacrament to our comfort?" Surely we may. God, who has called us thereunto, is faithful, who also will fulfill his promise to us. Receiving the broken bread as a representation of the broken body of Christ, we may "feed on him in our hearts by faith, with thanksgiving." Faith in the declaration he has made: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." John vi, 51, 54, 55. By faith in the heart may this mystical representation of the life-giving power of the sacrificial offering of Christ, be made a means of communicating its efficacy to our souls. We

may approach the table of the Lord, then, with the expectation of receiving a positive blessing, imparting new life and vigor to our souls. With such an expectation, by faith in our hearts, we ought at all times to approach it. Then would it always be a means of spiritual edification to us.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A EUCHARIST.

THIS term was early and almost universally used by Christians to designate the Lord's Supper. For this they had undoubtedly a satisfactory reason. The institution itself, and the design of it, both suggest the propriety of celebrating it in the spirit of praise and thanksgiving. At the very commencement Jesus "took bread, AND GAVE THANKS, and brake it, and gave unto them saying, "This is my body which is given for you." Luke xxii, 19. At the conclusion they "sung a hymn." Mark xiv, 26.

This eucharistic element was incorporated in the passover, and very appropriately copied in the institution of the sacrament. As a part of the celebration of the feast of the passover, the paschal hymn was sung. It was full of praise and thanksgiving. "Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord." Thus, in the highest strains of joyous

song, God's ancient people magnified his glorious name in celebrating the paschal feast. They recounted his mercies, their deliverance out of Egypt, his choosing Judah for a sanctuary, dividing the flood for their passage to the land of promise, and for turning "the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters." Ps. cxiv, 8. Much more did they praise him for spiritual blessings. Each joined heartily in the sacred choir as the *hallel* proceeded: "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful: the Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me." Ps. cxvi, 1–6.

Such expressions of praise were eminently suitable for the occasion. While the sacrifice of the victim presented to their minds the atonement which was provided for man, to expiate his guilt

and save him from eternal death. A realization of the benefits of the atonement in bringing them through the bitter pangs of repentance to the enjoyment of the love and favor of God, was suitably expressed by an appropriate song of praise.

And why should we not celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the established memorial of God's infinite love to man in giving his Son to die for him, and the pledge of his favor to all who piously observe it, with thanksgiving and praise? "Rejoicing always" is consistent with the most humiliating sense of our unworthiness as sinners saved by grace; and when is it more fitting that we should be deeply penetrated with such a sense of our condition as the recipients of the grace of God than while partaking of the sacred symbols of divine love in the passion and death of Christ, by which all blessings in this and the world to come are procured for us? Mystics may dream of a higher spiritual life by closing up every avenue of their hearts against the exercise of joyful emotions. But we "have not so learned Christ." "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound." Psa. lxxxix, 15.

Angels proclaimed the advent of Christ's humiliation with songs of praise. Saints are exhorted to "rejoice evermore." 1 Thess. v, 16. Spiritual delight is the companion of holiness, and flows from it as a stream from its fountain. With thanksgiving, then, we may appropriately celebrate the love of Christ in giving himself a ransom for us. What reason there is in the great and glorious things set forth by this ordinance to excite our gratitude and inspire us with the spirit of praise.

> "This eucharistic feast
> Our every want supplies,
> And still we by his death are blest,
> And share his sacrifice."

If rightly observed it is eminently calculated to heighten our sense of gratitude, and qualify us the better to strengthen our hearts in this grace, by expressing it in God's own appointed way. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people." Psa. cxvi, 12–14. So sung the people of Israel at their paschal feast.

So should his spiritual Israel celebrate his goodness and mercy at the altar of sacrifice under the new and better covenant. Of all his benefits, none move and stir the inmost soul of the pious believer to such heartfelt gratitude and thankfulness as his pardoning mercy and justifying grace. At every remembrance of the bitterness of his anguish, his "trouble and sorrow," under a sense of his guilt and pollution, and of the peace and joy which filled his soul when by faith he was enabled to receive Christ as his Saviour, his exulting heart was wont to exclaim, "I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Gal. vi, 14. As the whole Church in the day of God's gracious visitation, so each individual member of it, under the influence of his Spirit, cries out from the fullness of his overflowing soul: "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength

and my song; he also is become my salvation." Isa. xii, 1–3. At the Lord's table, let us remember, we make our eucharistic offering to him in the way he has appointed, and which he will approve. Be it thy care then, Christian, to carry the offering with thee. Not only a contrite spirit for all thy sins and shortcomings, to present at the mercy-seat for pardon through the atoning merits of the crucified Redeemer; but a heart full of faith and joy, to declare the goodness and mercy of God, and to sing his praise. This God will approve, and he will strengthen thy heart to love and praise him still more and more. Let none think that it is a vain thing thus to serve God in this ordinance. Only will he reject thy offering when it is polluted or defective. "In every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering," saith the Lord. "But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the Lord is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible." Mal. i, 12. Such offerings and such a spirit cannot be acceptable to God. But a complete offering, a heart-uniting faith in the atonement for the remission of sins, and love and gratitude for all our bless

ings received through the atonement, will be accepted, and rendered by a covenant-keeping God a means of spiritual edification to our souls. A living faith in the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin, and a spirit of devout praise and thanksgiving for all our mercies, are the spiritual tithes which we must bring in order to be accepted. "Prove me now therewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. iii, 10.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A COMMUNION.

THE remarks of Dr. Adam Clarke on this point are brief, but highly appropriate and instructive. "In 1 Cor. x, 16, the Eucharist is called the communion of the body and blood of Christ. As the term Κοινωνια signifies not only *communion* or *fellowship*, but *participation*, it evidently signifies that the faithful partakers had thereby fellowship or communion with the Lord Jesus, being made *partakers* of the benefits of his passion and death; so that as truly as their bodies were made partakers of, and were nourished by, the bread and wine, so truly were their souls made partakers of the *grace*, *mind*, and spirit of the Lord Jesus, so that they *dwelt in God*, and *God in them;* were *one* with *God*, and *God* with *them*."

He quotes Suicer as saying "that this term meant *communion* or *participation*, in reference to the Eucharist: 1. Because of the union of

the faithful with Christ and with each other. 2. Because believers are thereby not only united to Christ, but are also made partakers of his kingdom. 3. Because through this fellowship or communion they are deemed worthy of partaking of all that appertains to Christ."

"In the confession of faith of the Oriental Churches, quoted by him," he adds, "we find the following remarkable exposition of this communion or participation:

"'The holy communion is a symbol of our being incorporated or engrafted in the incarnated Son and Word of God, by which engrafting we are delivered from eternal death; for, as the root is sound and always flourishing, it is not possible that the branches united with it should not be sound and ever verdant.'

"A twofold communion is here pointed out: 1. Communion with *Christ*. 2. Communion with *each other*. For, 1, The branches, to continue flourishing, must have communion with the root; that is, must be nourished by those very juices imbibed by the root; and, 2, As the branches, being equally partakers of the root, have their common support and verdure from it, so believ-

ers, being all equally united to Christ, and deriv ing all their nourishment and support from him, stand in the same relation to each other as the branches do to the same tree. This is the purport of the following words of our blessed Lord: 'I am the *vine*, ye are the *branches*. . . . I pray for them that they may be one, even as thou Father art in me, and I in thee. I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.'"—*Clarke on the Eucharist.*

With all this communicants should be deeply impressed in their approaches to the Lord's table. The benefits procured for us by the broken body and shed blood of our adorable Redeemer, are more than the mere pardon of our sins. Through them we are, in the language of the Apostle Peter, "made partakers of the divine nature." 2 Peter i, 4. The end of St. Paul's earnest prayer for the Ephesians was, "that they might be filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. iii, 19. This is "the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." Eph. iii, 9. Herein also consist "the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in us, the hope of glory." Col. i, 27.

"Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." John i, 3; for "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." 1 Cor. vi, 17.

This fellowship, let it be remembered, is predicated of only the living branches in the mystical olive-tree. Their spirit and life they draw from the root. "For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump also is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches." Rom. xi, 16. It is only by faith that the living branches abide in the tree, and thus partake of the "root and fatness" of it.

The communion which the Redeemer of the world condescends to hold with impoverished mortals, is indicated by his declaration to the Church of the Laodiceans: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. iii, 20. Glorious privilege to an unequal party, raised to fellowship and communion by condescending goodness! It is also set forth in the parable of the feast in the Gospel. Those prepared with a wedding garment were honored as guests, and participated in the communion to which they

were admitted at their Lord's table. Though they were unworthy and degraded while clothed in the rags and filth of their sinful natures, renovated by divine power and grace, and clothed with "robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb," (Rev. vii, 14,) they were made welcome guests at his marriage supper. Their communion was a manifestation of their fellowship; but the supper was provided by the Lord of the feast, and furnished for the benefit of the participants. The feast, to supply their wants and save them from death, was more to them than even the honor of fellowship to which they were exalted. At least, fellowship without participation would avail little to starving, perishing men. "Blessed are they that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Luke xiv, 15. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matt. v, 6. From all these forms of expression, we learn, that as the life of the body is preserved by the food suited to our animal nature, so is the life of the soul preserved by the spiritual food which God has provided for it; and as our physical nature is supported and refreshed by a rich and plentiful

feast, so is our spiritual being revived and strengthened by the bread and wine of the kingdom.

But let us not be deceived by confounding the ordinance with the grace it is designed to represent. The bread and wine are symbols only of the broken body and shed blood of the adorable Redeemer. In receiving these symbols we have the aid of our senses, our seeing and tasting, to help our faith in receiving the spiritual nourishment they are designed to represent. The outward act of participation of the elements is but a sign of the grace received through faith in the atonement. And as it is of God's own appointment, may we not expect that the ordinance will be rendered a means of imparting such grace for the nourishment of our souls when piously observed? Hear the Master of the feast say, "Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Isa. lv, 2. "The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him; your hearts shall live forever." Ps. xxii, 26. Live by the communion you have with "Christ who is our life." Col. iii, 4. Live by virtue of

the grace he communicates—the "life which is hid with Christ in God." Col. iii, 3. It is by this spiritual life, hidden with Christ in God, as the life of the branch is hidden in the tree, that we are preserved and nourished in our communion with Him who is life itself, and the source of life to all who enjoy it.

Let none then be deluded by the absurdity of the Church of Rome, which maintains that the life-giving virtue and grace which saves and edifies the communicant is in the consecrated wafer; and that it saves any to whom the priest gives it with intention, on his part, to invest it with that virtue and grace, (except they be guilty of mortal sin,) without repentance, or faith, or good intentions, or purpose to lead new lives, or anything else required by the word of God, in those who receive it.

"This notion," to adopt the language of the profound and discriminating Richard Watson, "represents the sacraments as a mere charm, the use of which, being totally disjoined from every mental exercise, cannot be regarded as a reasonable service. It gives men the hope of receiving, by the use of a mere charm, a full participation

of the grace of God, although they continue to indulge in that very large class of sins to which the accommodating morality of the Church of Rome extends the name of venial; and yet it makes this high privilege entirely dependent upon the intention of another, who, although he performs all the outward acts which belong to the sacrament, may, if he chooses, withhold the communication of that physical virtue without which the sacrament is of none avail."—*Watson's Dictionary; Art. Sacrament.*

With equal earnestness we would urge communicants not to rest in the extremely low views respecting the sacrament which are entertained by those who reject the atonement. Considering it as a memorial by which the remembrance of past events is revived in our minds, which tends to cherish pious sentiments, they are right as far as they go. But repudiating the sacramental aspects of the ordinance, they rob it of its chief excellence, and render it inefficacious in what is most essential to it. The effect of it is, according to their views, purely moral, and contributes, by its moral influence, to the improvement of those who observe it in the same manner with reading

the Scriptures, social conference with pious people, or any other exercise leading the mind to a contemplation of religious subjects.

But to enjoy all the benefits it is designed to convey, let the communicant embrace in his view of it all that was designed by the great Master in instituting it. Ceremonies may be adopted by Christians which contribute to their moral and spiritual improvement; and these may vary in different communities and with different persons, as circumstances may dictate. "But no rite which is not ordained by God can be conceived to be a *seal* of his promise, or pledge of any event that depends on his good pleasure. Hence, that the rite may come up to our idea of a sacrament, we require in it, not merely a vague and general resemblance between the external matter which is the visible substance of the rite, and the thing thereby signified, but also words of institution, and a promise by which the two are connected together."—*Rev. R. Watson.*

Such is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It was instituted in form; that form was simple and specific, prescribing acts and words to be observed till the coming of the Son of man to judge

the world. "THIS do," said he, "in remembrance of me." Here is the obligation enjoined. To obey is our duty; to obey in form, with unreserved confidence; to obey because it is enjoined by our Lord and Master, who has made our obedience a test of our love to him, and connected with it a promise of his love and favor. "If any man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." John xiv, 23.

The sacrament received may, indeed, like the Gospel preached, fail to produce the designed effect, not being mixed with faith in them that receive it. But received by faith—faith in the atonement made by Jesus Christ upon the cross, which the symbols used in the ordinance represent, and in his pledge to render the ordinance a means of communicating spiritual influence to the soul—it will profit them. It will be to them "a feast of fat things." Their souls will be refreshed and edified in communing with their Lord. Let none doubt it. Let all come to this feast expecting a blessing. Let them look upon it as a sacramental ordinance, instituted by their cruci-

fied Redeemer for their spiritual edification, having his pledge that it shall be blessed to those who rightly observe it, and rely upon the word of his promise that he "will sup with them, and they with him."

Christians! this is your privilege. When you hear the words pronounced, "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him *in thy heart* by faith with thanksgiving," let them sink down deep into your soul. Digest them in your thoughts, and impress them on your minds. Meditate upon them with prayer and supplication, that you may fully understand their import, and receive the grace which such faith brings into the soul. Then shall you know the true meaning of St. Paul's words: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. x, 16. Then shall you experience a realization of the promise, "And my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John xiv, 23. Then will you be enabled to say with the poet:

"My Redeemer to know, to feel his blood flow;
This is life everlasting, 'tis heaven below."

Again, the zest of a feast depends essentially upon the mutual love and confidence of the parties in communion. It must be believed and felt that the welcome on the part of the provider is sincere and hearty, and that there is no want of love and confidence, no secret cause of disaffection to interrupt a full and unreserved flow of mutual affection, on the part of the guests admitted to commune with him. Who would relish a feast with enmity in his heart against the provider, or enjoy pleasure by communing with him, having no fellowship for him? None; not even voluptuous pleasure-takers. Men of the world, conscious of the embarrassment and confusion that such a cause of unfitness to participate in a feast provided for the good cheer of select friends, with enmity in their hearts against the provider of it, could not wish to be guests, nor enjoy the pleasure such an entertainment is designed to give, if they were admitted.

How much more must any want of affection to Christ, or cause of unreconciliation to him in us, shut us out from the spiritual delights which they

have, whose communion of soul is uninterrupted by any such cause? The man without the wedding garment may have entered the feast thoughtlessly, as one may approach the Lord's table without considering the consequence of this want of fitness; or, he may have done it recklessly, to challenge the right and integrity of the Lord who provided it, in exacting discriminating qualifications in the guests. But it was not possible for him to suppose that he could participate in the delights which unrestrained fellowship and communion with the Master would afford. When he was detected, therefore, he was speechless.

To have communion with Christ, then, and participate in the benefits of such communion, we must have love to him. This we cannot have while we love the world. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John ii, 15. We must cast out of our hearts the love of the world, and every unholy desire. Any wrong temper or improper affection cannot be concealed from the eye of our heart-searching Lord and Saviour. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart,

and knoweth all things." 1 John iii, 20. How can we, condemned in our own hearts, and condemned by the holy and blessed God, enjoy a feast of communion with him. It deprives us of all spiritual freedom, which is essential to a free exercise of our confiding affections in his presence, and a free flow of feeling in our communion with him.

But pure love to our Lord and Master, and especially when this is accompanied with the witness of the Spirit that we are accepted of him and adopted into the family of God, prepares us to approach his table with the confidence and freedom of children, and to commune with him without embarrassment or restraint. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that [thus] keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by

the Spirit which he hath given us." 1 John iii, 21–24. "To as many as received him, [Christ,] to them gave he power to become the sons of God;" *i. e.*, the privileges or freedom of the sons of God. John i, 12.

Our communion with Christ, of which this ordinance is a sign, is again indicated by the figure of a family or household, of which he is the head. This is a spiritual household. Its spirit and temper are heavenly. "For Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Heb. iii, 5, 6. "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Eph. ii, 19. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." Eph. iii, 14–16. What a theme for devout contemplation! A household! a family! a heavenly-minded fra-

ternity, of one heart and one soul, united to celebrate the love of Him who gave himself for their redemption, in his presence, and at a feast of his own providing! The symbols that are presented to the eye and the taste represent the sacrificial offering which was the price of the purchased possession, and are a sign of the riches of the grace received through faith in him; and a realization of that grace by participation in communion with him who is Head over all, gives them to feel that they are strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man! Well said the Psalmist: "The Lord is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Psa. lxvii, 26. "They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." Psa. lxxxiv, 7. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: blessed is the man whose strength is in thee." Psa. lxxxiv, 4, 5. "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Psa. lxxxiv, 2. "All my springs are in thee." Psa. lxxxvii, 7.

"Thou art the Sea of Love,
Where all my pleasures roll;

The circle where my passions move,
And center of my soul."

Again, the communion of Christians with Christ is beautifully and forcibly illustrated by the sympathy that subsists between the members and the head of the human body. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." 1 Cor. xii, 27. "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the Church." Col. i, 15. God the Father "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. i, 22. "In him," our head, "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Col. ii, 9. He is the source of life, and wisdom, and purity, and spiritual nourishment to the Church, the living members of his mystical body. "In him," in the strictest and purest sense, they "live, and move, and have their being." Acts xvii, 18. And true believers feel what John said respecting him as the fountain of grace and life to those who dwell in him. "Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." John i, 16. He who "is the head of the Church" is "the Saviour of the

body." Eph. v, 23. By their union with him, the members of the body are brought into sympathy with their Head, and live in his life. Thus he becomes their salvation and their strength. He "from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love," communicates to every member his own life-giving energy and the joy of his salvation. Thus we are constituted one with him, and one in him as our Head. And our communion is indicated by the sympathy and affection which subsists between the head and the members of the body.

But "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." 2 Cor. v, 17. He has been brought into this glorious union with Christ by the "kindness and love of God his Saviour," who, "according to his mercy saved him, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Tit. iii, 4, 5.

Thus the believer sees and feels that his new life and all his spiritual enjoyments are procured

by the blood of atonement, shed upon the cross for him and for many, for the remission of sins. All this he owes to the love of his crucified Redeemer, who bore the sins of many; who was "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;" by whose "stripes we are healed." "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John iii, 1. What *manner* of love is this? Where is the like? That he should first give his son to die, that our sins might be forgiven, and we become the sons of God, and then forgive our sins, and adopt us, as fellow-heirs with the saints to the spiritual inheritance he has provided for them that love him. Was ever love like this?

"Behold the Saviour of mankind,
Nailed to the shameful tree;
How vast the love that him inclined
To bleed and die for me."

All this the Christian communicant sees and feels, as he communes with Christ by the Spirit. His soul cleaves to its life-giving head. He says in his heart, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;

and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me!" Gal. ii, 20. "O my soul! what shall I render to the Lord for this unspeakable gift? and what for his condescending goodness in taking me into favor with himself, and uniting me to himself, as a member in his own body, to live by his life, and enjoy the bliss of communion with him?" "This is my beloved, and this is my friend." Cant. v, 16. "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me." Cant. vii, 10. "My beloved is mine, and I am his." "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste; he brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Cant. ii, 3, 4. He says to his guests, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Cant. v, 1. O what fullness! what freeness! A fountain is open for sin and uncleanness. Grace, mercy, and peace are abundantly given to refresh the famishing souls of men. This is the spiritual communion Christian believers have with Christ, and which is signified by the symbols of his death in the sacrament. Let it be borne in mind, then, that, in the lan-

guage of the articles of religion as professed by Protestant Christians generally, "Sacraments, ordained of Christ, are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good-will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him."

Christian reader, have you not solemnly affirmed, "I believe in the communion of saints?" This is the communion of saints with Christ their Lord and Redeemer. How delightfully precious is it to the soul hungering and thirsting after righteousness. And when may we hope to experience it in its fullness, if not in the use of the means he has ordained for the very purpose of communicating it to us? Surely, a lively faith in him, and delight in communion with him, should inspire us with an earnest desire to participate in this glorious privilege as often as an opportunity offers:

"Who thus our faith employ,
His sufferings to record,
E'en now we mournfully enjoy
COMMUNION with our Lord."

But the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is held as a COMMUNION, again, because it is a token of the fellowship of those who are partakers of it. Their fellowship is a spiritual fellowship. Being born of the Spirit, "they are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii, 18. As the branches in the tree all derive their nutriment in common from the tree, and are partakers of its substance and nature, so the branches in Christ Jesus partake of his spirit, and are of one spirit in him. No truth touching experimental religion is more largely and impressively dwelt upon in the Scriptures than this: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i, 7.

This fellowship is founded in love. Love is its source and its bond. It is love of a peculiar kind—BROTHERLY LOVE; such love as is faintly indicated by that which glows in the bosoms of affectionate brothers and sisters, children of the same parents. There may be love, in its nature and degree, for others; but brotherly love knows no other like itself. It is deep, ardent, and effective, while a consciousness of the exist-

ence of the relation by which it is produced, remains uninterrupted by any cause of disaffection. This brotherly love is an element, a part and parcel, of the new life we receive by regeneration. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," 1 John iii, 14; "and every one that [thus] loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." 1 John iv, 7. This is brotherly love, which is a controlling affection in the hearts of all who are born of God, and is manifested in their lives, the distinguishing mark which separates them from the world. And this is the source of that fellowship which their communion as Christians implies.

With this new spiritual nature, and new classification, the children of God are required to come out from the world and be separate; to unite with their own, as the flock of Christ, or members of the household of God, and to show themselves to be "a peculiar people." This is most reasonable and proper; first, to confess their Lord, and the love they have to him, and also to show that they have renounced the world as unworthy of their affections, and united in love

and fellowship to seek "the things which are above." Col. iii, 1. Home is the place for children, whose affections draw them to parents and brethren. Strangers may not intermeddle with its delights. "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world," said Christ, "therefore the world hateth you." John xv, 19. "Seeing," therefore, that "ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart, fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." 1 Peter i, 22, 23.

This love to God and his people, implanted in the souls of all his children by the Holy Spirit, distinguishes them as brethren in the highest and purest sense of that term, and brings them into a fellowship and communion which no other force in our moral or social nature can produce. While other social affinities are ruptured by impulses of passion, and the ties of love and friendship are severed by slight causes, the love that rules in the hearts of God's children "is not easily provoked, beareth all things, never faileth."

1 Cor. xiii, 5, 7, 8. And in a community where all possess it, there is no abatement of its ardor, for it "thinketh no evil." While they continue to fulfill the injunction of the Apostle, "Let love be without dissimulation; be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another," (Rom. xii, 9,) the holy flame will increase more and more, until their hearts are "knit together in love," and they, as members of the body of Christ, "holding the Head, from which all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." Col. ii, 2, 19.

These are the representatives of Christ upon earth, "whereunto they were appointed a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." 1 Peter ii, 9. They are the "holy Catholic Church" in its militant state; "the light of the world," reflecting the glory of the Lord who is their light; "a city that is set on a hill, which cannot be hid." Matt. v, 14.

They are branches in the living vine, which bear fruit—the fruit of the Spirit, which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v, 22, 23. They "live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit." Gal. v, 25. They are the exponents of the wisdom which is from above, "pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.' James iii, 17. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matt. vii, 16.

How strongly marked, in this world of malicious passions and discordant strife, is this brotherhood of Christians, by the Spirit that dwelleth in them. O what sweetness, gentleness, and kindly affections it diffuses through the whole body, producing peace and happiness in every part of it. It is a test of the union of the members with their Head, who was "meek and lowly," and full of love." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii, 35.

This principle of "brotherly love" is, as has been said, the result of that change wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, which is denominated regene-

ration, or the new birth. By nature we have it not; and in our unregenerate state we find in our hearts no principle which so draws us into fellowship with others as to become a bond of union. But the experience of all who are truly born of God attests the truth of this remark, that when "the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost," all who bear the image of the Saviour, and breathe his spirit, whether they be rich or poor, bond or free, companion or stranger, are embraced in the arms of their affection, and beloved with an ardor and tenderness unknown to the unregenerated heart.

It is a peculiar quality of this principle of love, to unite in one all who possess it, and to bring them together to express it, in obedience to the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. "I will give them one heart," saith the Lord, "and I will put a new spirit within them; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Ezek. xi, 19, 20.

One heart! a tender heart of flesh! What a

description of the tender love of Christians! Heart melting into heart! Hearts running together like so many drops of water! Nay, more, "The multitude of them that believed were of ONE HEART and ONE SOUL." Acts iv, 32. Sin hardens the heart and alienates the affections. From the day of Cain till now, sin has generated hatred, and malice, and envy; has set the heart of man against his brother. It has made foes of the members of the same household. Sin, in its tendency, divides and keeps asunder the hearts of men. It incrusts them in its own obdurate nature, and individualizes and isolates them, like cold pebbles of marble. Paul describes sinners as "covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." Rom. i, 31. They have no spirit of love, no tenderness of affection within them, to unite and cement them together. This truth the converted man has realized in his own experience. When he saw the wickedness of his heart, as a sinner, he felt that it was cold, unmoved by love and sympathy, and indulged in enmity against others. Perhaps it was the last thing he overcame, in his struggle for deliverance from the guilt and

dominion of sin, the anger he harbored in his bosom against some fellow-being. But when grace subdued that enmity of heart, and filled him with the love of Christ, a change was wrought which melted the whole soul into sym pathy and tenderness, and drew it by an overwhelming influence into communion with kindred spirits.

This is brotherly love. It is breathed in the affectionate spirit, and expressed in the endearing language which the disciples of Christ only can fully appreciate in their communion with each other. Saul of Tarsus, hardened "through the deceitfulness of sin," witnessed, unmoved, the cruel death of pious Stephen; and "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," obtained letters from the high priest, that "if he found any of this way," he might "bring them bound to Jerusalem;" "and," he says, "when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." Acts xxvi, 10, 11.

Such is sin, even under the garb of self-righteousness, and a zeal for the outward forms of religion. It has no sympathy for holiness nor for those who love it. Inflamed by the workings of its own spirit, it is stimulated in its contacts with piety and devotion to madness; and in its insane ravings breathes out threatenings and slaughter against those who have nothing in their hearts to return for such malice but love. But this same Saul is changed. The change is sudden. It is effected by the grace of God. He confesses Christ as the author of this change, wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, and received through faith in the atonement. This great salvation now becomes his theme. "I thank Jesus Christ our Lord," he says, "who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit

for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." 1 Timothy i, 12–16. Grace, faith, and love; these constitute the fountain that now fills his soul. He has now a new spirit in him. Its breathings are love; love to God and man. Nothing contrary to love, not even toward enemies and persecutors. Toward those of like precious faith it is ardent, tender, fraternal. His language is the spontaneous outpouring of the feelings within. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Matt. xii, 33. "Brethren," "beloved brethren," "holy brethren," "dearly beloved," "my dearly beloved and longed for," are forms of expression which everywhere mark the deep brotherly affection that dictates his language when speaking to or of those who were one with him in Christ Jesus. And to his enemies his language is always

"Courteous, pitiful, and kind."

St. Paul was indeed a marked example of the great change wrought in a sinner by conversion, producing brotherly love and corresponding lan-

guage and conduct. But the same spirit of love and tenderness was manifested in the lives and language of Peter, and James, and John, of whose antecedent opposition to it less is said, if it ever existed in the same degree; and all of them ascribe it to the same cause, the change wrought in them by the Holy Ghost.

These are only a pattern of the Spirit's molding in every true believer in Christ. The image of the heavenly is stamped upon all. Being of one heart and one soul they are one in Christ Jesus. There "is one body and one spirit, even as they are called in one hope of their calling." Eph. iv, 4. Thus has "God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he has loved them, quickened them together with Christ," and raised them up together, and made them sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus." Eph. ii, 4–6.

The strength of this principle of brotherly love in the heart of the new man in Christ Jesus is witnessed again in its controlling influence upon the lives and conduct of the early Christians. There were at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and Judea, and

Cappadocia, and Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians," who all heard the apostles and disciples of Jesus speak of "the wonderful works of God." Acts ii, 9–11. Of this promiscuous multitude, with all their varieties of local prejudices, national animosities, sectional and personal feuds, shades of differences of opinion, and natural opposition to holiness, and to the followers of the despised Galilean in particular, three thousand were awakened and converted, and added to the number of the faithful the same day. "And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. . . . And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need; and they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Acts ii, 42–46.

What an exhibition of the power of love, to draw together and unite these previously discord-

ant elements! Was the like ever known where this internal force of brotherly love did not exist? Never. It has no equal, nothing that can be substituted to produce such a result. The community of goods, which was not enjoined as a perpetual duty, nor continued beyond the necessity which prompted it for the occasion, the more conclusively shows the depth and strength of that new-born love which produced it, as the spontaneous fruit of this vital principle. They who brought all their goods, and sold them, saw their brethren in need; and they loved them too intensely to say to them, "Be ye fed and clothed," without giving them the things they needed. "They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods," or parting with them, in compliance with the impulses of the love they had for their suffering brethren, and for the cause on account of which they were subject in common to suffer.

This same spirit of brotherly love was manifested in after times, in the liberality with which Christians in one place contributed for the relief of the poor saints in another. This was made by both St. James and St. John a test of the sincerity of their faith in Christ. "If a brother

or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" James ii, 15, 16. "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 John iii, 17. It cannot. The love of God dwelling in him will fill him with compassion for the suffering poor of all classes, but especially his brethren with whom he is united in a common brotherhood, as members of the family of God. Such is the fruit of brotherly love, the source and bond of the communion of saints. To all who know its power, and the pleasure of its enjoyment, we would say, "Let brotherly love continue." Heb. xiii, 1. Permit no act, no error, no neglect, to crush it out, or quench its heavenly glow. "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." 1 Pet. i, 22.

"Thus may we abide in union
With each other and the Lord;
And possess, in sweet communion,
Joys which earth cannot afford."

There is one more view to be taken of this subject of the communion of saints. "The Captain of their salvation," who by his passion and death procured it, and, from the plenitude "of his fullness," imparts the riches of his grace to all who are in him, condescends to become one with them. In the glorious plan of salvation God did ordain and predestinate that all who were born of the Spirit, and adopted into his family, should "be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Rom. viii, 29. Hence, the "great mystery" of "God manifest in the flesh." "For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them BRETHREN, saying, I will declare thy name unto MY BRETHREN; in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee." Heb. ii, 11, 12. What condescension! What an example of the spirit of humility, which is an essential element of communion and fellowship among the children of the same common parent. It was this spirit the apostle recommended when he said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Col. ii, 5. "Not ashamed to call

them brethren!" Hear him! When the multitude that thronged him said, "Thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee," he answered, "Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about upon them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother, and MY BRETHREN!" Mark iii, 32, 34. "My mother and MY BRETHREN are these which hear the word of God, and keep it." Luke viii, 21. Hear him again, to the two Marys, whom an angel had informed that he was risen from the dead: "Be not afraid; go tell MY BRETHREN that I go into Galilee, and there they shall see me." Matt. xxviii, 10. Nay, more, he solemnly affirms that at the last day, when he will acknowledge those before the Father and the holy angels who have confessed him before men, he will say to them on his right hand, "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you; . . . for I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat," etc.; "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these MY BRETHREN, ye have done it unto ME." Matt. xxv, 40.

Thus are we led to contemplate our blessed Lord as a BROTHER, the first, highest, most holy, most glorious of the household of God; yet a

BROTHER, partaking of the sympathies and affections of the brotherhood, and evincing the depth, and fervor, and purity of the feeling interest he takes in the welfare of ALL the spiritual household, by promising to reward, at the great day of retribution, a charity bestowed upon one of the least of HIS BRETHREN. In this mysterious character of a brother, man with man, he appeared to two of his disciples on their way to Emmaus, conversed with them, accompanied them to their home, and sat at meat with them; and as he sat at meat with them "he took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Luke xxiv, 30–32. Thus did the spirit of communion invisibly work in them, "and he was known of them in breaking of bread." Luke xxiv, 35. In like manner he appeared to the eleven apostles in Jerusalem, to whom the two disciples had communicated his manifestation of himself to them. As "they were terrified and affrighted,

he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? Behold my hands and feet; it is I myself." Being furnished with food, "he did eat before them," a token and demonstration that he would make himself known as a brother, of whom they need not be afraid. In view of all this testimony of his fellowship with his people, we are invited to the glorious feast of spiritual things which his love has procured for us, and to meet him at his table as a sympathizing brother and friend.

Nor is this all. The children of God have a yet clearer title to the privilege of eating bread with their divine Lord and Redeemer in the kingdom of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Rom. viii, 14–17. O what manner of love is this, that we should be not only called the sons of God, but have given to us the witness of the Spirit that we are such, and constituted thereby "joint

heirs with Christ" to all the privileges and abundant provisions of his kingdom! What a brotherhood; what a royal family is "the household of God!" O Jesus! our blessed Lord and Saviour, how can it be that thou shouldst

> "Make slaves the partners of thy throne,
> Deck'd with a never-fading crown?
> Hence our hearts melt, our eyes o'erflow,
> Our words are lost, nor will we know,
> Nor will we think of aught beside,
> My Lord, my Love, is crucified."

In view of the foregoing remarks, we perceive in what sense the Lord's Supper is a communion. It is a token or sign of the communion of those who worthily partake of it; of their communion with their Head, as their Lord and Saviour; and with one another, as members of "the household of God."

In all ages, and among all people, eating and drinking together has been taken as a token or sign of friendship. Reconciliations between enemies has been thus signified and made known. Parties at variance, with enmity in their hearts against each other, have everywhere signified the continuance of that enmity by refusing or avoiding to eat with the objects of their hatred.

This mode of publicly signifying the secret animosity of the soul against those of uncongenial feelings became in time the test of antagonisms in politics and religion, denoting the prejudices and bigotry of nation against nation, and sect against sect. "The Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination to the Egyptians." Gen. xliii. And "they that were of the circumcision contended" with Peter, who opened the mission of the Gospel to the Gentiles by preaching to the household of Cornelius, "saying, thou wentest in unto men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them." Acts xi, 3.

While this settled opposition to individuals, parties, or sects, was understood to be maintained and openly signified by a firm and obstinate avoidance of eating with them, it was equally understood that reconciliation of contending parties, and peace and good-will in the hearts of friends united by kindred sympathies, were signified by their eating and drinking together. This, let us remember, has been so generally understood in all ages, and among all people, that the acts themselves came to be as a common language, read and known of all men.

Hence it became a significant rite in all religions. The worshipers of idols have had their sacred feasts in token of their connection with the gods they worshiped, and their sympathy with their fellow-worshipers. All idolatry is so directly opposed to the worship of the true God, that the very appearance of sympathy with it, by partaking of its rites in any form, is prohibited.

"But I say," says St. Paul, "that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils." 1 Cor. x, 20, 21. Thus does our eating and drinking at the Lord's table distinguish us before the world as renouncing all idols, and cleaving to him and his people in heart and life. It is a profession of communion with the household of God, which all men agree to hold as exceedingly sacred.

In view of this prevalent sentiment, we see the fitness of the festive institutions and ordinances of the house of God, under both the Old and

the New Testament dispensations. His people were a chosen people, distinct and separate from all others; and they were set apart as his peculiar worshipers, to show forth his praise to all the nations of the earth. They were forbidden to bow down to any other God, or to worship any other; and commanded to cleave to the Lord their God with all their hearts, and to love him supremely. As such a distinct people, in covenant with the God they acknowledged and worshiped, they were known and regarded by the nations as the enemies of idolatry in all its forms.

Hence the institutions of the feasts under the law. Even in the passover, that solemn ordinance of sacrifice and blood, was incorporated the rite of communion, by the provision that all who offered the lamb in sacrifice should eat thereof. This was the type. In doing this the people of God manifested their faith in the atoning sacrifice which God had provided for the redemption of the world, their union in that faith in opposition to the idolatry with which they were surrounded, and their love to God and one another. It was at least a public profession of

all this, as all men were accustomed to construe such acts.

In like manner our blessed Lord instituted the supper, to be observed by his people not only to commemorate his passion and death, as a sacrificial offering for their sins, but also as a token of the fellowship and love which binds them together as the family of God. It is not feasting literally upon the sacrifice; nor can it be, as he himself was the sacrifice once offered for the sins of many. But it is the true representative which he himself has appointed, to be eaten by faith, and is a sign of the spiritual grace most appropriately expressed, in the language of the ritual, as "feeding on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving."

As a badge or token of our profession, that we are the disciples of Christ, and belong to the family of God, communing at the Lord's table was taken, in the primitive age of the Church, as conclusive and unquestionable. So the enemies of the first Christians viewed it; hence, in the times of persecution, to persist in communing was deemed sufficient cause to subject Christians to torture and death; to refrain, and take the

cup consecrated to an idol, was accepted as satisfactory by their persecutors, and exempted them from suffering. So that to practice communion at the Lord's table, and thus confess their connection with Christ and his followers, exposed them constantly to the liability of persecution, imprisonment, torture, and death. How strong was that fellowship, and how full of support and comfort the grace they received in observing this ordinance, which sustained them in the habitual observance of it, while daily exposed to torture and death on account of professing it!

The practice of the primitive Christians in this respect shows the estimate they put upon it as a token of their fellowship and a means of grace. They practiced it openly and every day. After the manner of the Jewish Church, who openly confessed their covenant relation to God and his Church by their daily sacrifices, so Christians, as the disciples of Christ, confessed him daily in the ordinance which he had instituted for that purpose. That the ordinance was observed daily by the primitive Christians, and continued to be in many places for three hundred years after its institution, is affirmed by the con-

current testimony of history. Contemplate, then, the whole body of Christians, after receiving the baptism of the Spirit, and the law of love written in their hearts, cleaving to each other, and "continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, eating their meat with gladness of heart." Acts ii, 46. The meaning, probably, is that they met in the temple, or their public assemblies, on the Sabbath, and in the house of some one of the brethren each other day of the week. The Sabbath was wholly devoted to worship; on week-days, only the morning and evening. These were truly religious meetings. Reading the Scriptures, preaching, or exhortation, after the manner of the apostles, and their immediate successors; prayer, singing, distributing alms to the poor, and confessing Christ in breaking bread, made up the services of the occasion. Such were the daily sacrifices in the Christian Church, adopted in the place of those which were before observed in the Jewish Church. The pious Jew had to bring his lamb daily, to be sacrificed by the priest, as an acceptable offering to God. "But we have an High Priest," says Paul, "who

needeth not DAILY, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered himself." Heb. vii, 27. This offering the Christian worshipers had daily before them, not in the lamb sacrificed upon the Jewish altar, but in the symbols of Christ's death upon the cross, which they celebrated every day, and thus professed Christ before men.

Thus the first Christians continued steadfastly to cleave to the Lord and to one another through ten fiery persecutions, every day professing their connection with him and his household by an act which subjected them to death, not counting their lives dear in so holy a cause as confessing Christ in the ordinance he had appointed. Surely in *them* love (their love to Christ and their brethren) was stronger than death!

It was in view of this practice, and the liability to which it exposed Christians, that they were represented as being "always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake," (2 Cor. iv, 11;) as standing "in jeopardy every hour;" as "dying DAILY;" as being, for Christ's sake, "killed all the day long," or "accounted as sheep for the

slaughter." Rom. viii, 36. "They endured," like the faithful of former ages, "as seeing Him who is invisible;" "had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings," "of bonds and imprisonments;" "were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted" by promise of deliverance if they would recant; "slain with the sword, wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented;" but they remained steadfast, "not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." Heb. xi, 35, etc. Well said the Saviour, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross DAILY, and follow me." Luke ix, 23. Was not this the *cross* eminently of those times? But the faithful took it up "daily."

Contemplate, I say, the whole body of Christians, thus exposed, and thus suffering, on account of their faith and hope in Christ and their love of the brethren, daily confessing him by the act which their enemies accounted sufficient to condemn them to suffer any or all of these things, with a knowledge of the fact that to refrain from such confession of him, and withdraw even quietly from associating with his followers,

would exempt them from these sufferings and who can fail to see that the faith, hope, and love by which they were united in fellowship, were exceedingly strong and powerful in them. But what it was in them, it may be in all Christians. If the grace in our hearts were as deep, pure, and abiding as it was in theirs, we should feel the same interest to signify it by the appointed sign, and the same pleasure and profit in doing so. Can this be doubted by any who believe that the sacraments were instituted for the benefit of the children of God to the end of time?

As the fellowship of the saints is founded in the union of their hearts, "knit together in love," of which their communion at the Lord's table is a sign and a profession, so it implies corresponding acts to perpetuate and increase this love. Brotherly love is a tender affection, and requires to be guarded and protected by all those acts of brotherly kindness and mutual sympathy which indicate its sincerity. As communion at the Lord's table is universally considered a profession of love to the members of Christ's body, the occasion of such communion, whether it be frequent or seldom, is deemed a time for self-

examination, whether there be anything in us contrary to the spirit of love which we profess; and also examination on the part of the Church, of our lives and tempers, to decide whether we be worthy to be admitted. This idea respecting the sacrament as a communion has been very general, if not universal, in all Christian Churches, from the beginning to the present time. With the primitive Christians it was an element of power, in preserving the purity and spirituality of the Church.

Let it be borne in mind, then, that the love we profess in coming to the table of the Lord, implies compassion for the needy brethren, and liberality in contributing for their relief. It has been seen that the primitive Christians were so deeply imbued with this spirit that, to meet the necessities of their brethren under the circumstances, many sold their possessions, and brought the price thereof and laid it at the apostles' feet, to be distributed as every man had need. It is not presumed that they were required to bring all, unless all was necessary. But such was the extent and the purity of their love that many did so, evincing thereby that they loved

their brethren—their poor and suffering brethren —"not in word only, but in deed and in truth." Any act or evidence that we are destitute of this charity toward the poor, or are insincere in our profession of it, as was made manifest in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, who professed more than was in their hearts, destroys confidence and brotherly love, and renders us unfit to participate in this communion.

A communion season is, therefore, a proper occasion to manifest our charity for the poor, and to test our spirits, whether indeed we possess this grace in our hearts. The primitive Christians not only contributed for the poor at their daily communions, but sought them out and administered to their relief. Hence the fact stated in Acts iii, 1: "There arose a murmuring among the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the DAILY ministrations." Even this unintentional indication of partiality would have become a root of bitterness to mar their charity, if it had not been brought to view by the daily observance of the communion, and thus prevented.

The Church has provided, by its ritual, that a

collection shall be made for the poor at every communion service. This ought never to be neglected. Though the necessity may not be the same as in the days of the apostles, yet Christ says, "The poor ye have always with you." John xii, 8. And in the neglect of it, the ordinance ceases to be a test by which communicants are required to examine themselves, and decide their fitness to participate, and an occasion to exhibit evidence of their love for their poor brethren to the Church and the world. The design of the ordinance, as a communion, demands that this practice be never neglected. If the primitive Christians manifested their love by remembering the poor at their DAILY communions, surely we ought not to neglect it once a MONTH, or in a QUARTER OF A YEAR. And let it never be forgotten, that if we would examine ourselves in view of profitably partaking of the Lord's Supper, and not making a false profession of brotherly love, we must possess this grace—a heart to feel for the poor, and to contribute according to our ability for their relief.

Again, communion at the Lord's table implies a covenant or pledge by the communicants, that

they will live together as brethren, care for each other's welfare, watch over one another in love, and perform toward each other all those brotherly acts which will tend to increase their affection for each other, and promote the happiness and wellbeing of the whole brotherhood. To all this every person solemnly pledges himself when he presents himself for admission into any branch of the Christian Church. And communion at the Lord's table is a renewal of those covenant vows. In primitive times, when they communed daily, these covenant obligations were daily in their minds and hearts, to be carried out in practice. They imposed the obligation to watch over one another in love; to instruct, advise, counsel, admonish, reprove, exhort, comfort, and do whatever else brotherly affection might dictate as necessary and proper to be done, to edify and save a brother. Hence, St. Paul says, Heb. x, 19, 22–25: "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good

works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting" (that is, instructing, admonishing, comforting, etc.) "one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Hence, also, in view of their daily communions, he says, Heb. iii, 12, 13, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another DAILY, while it is called TO-DAY." Here is both the duty and the reason for it. Fulfill all your covenant obligations to your brethren every day, ("To-DAY," is the emphatic language of the apostle,) that with a clear conscience and a sincere heart you may renew your profession of love with them at the Lord's table in your daily communion. The duty can be no less binding on those who commune less frequently. Although a month, or three months, may intervene between the seasons of it, we ought to be every day prepared for it, and therefore see that nothing is left undone any one day which a preparation for it requires to be done.

Again, a communion season is a time for self-examination, to inquire if our hearts are right.

We cannot, consistently with brotherly love, harbor in our hearts anger, enmity, or ill-will against any brother. All hardness or bitterness of spirit, tending to dampen the ardor of our affections, and weaken the confidence of our brethren, must be cast out of our bosoms. Indulgence in it will inflame the worst passions of our nature, and lead to malice and revenge. No temper of this kind can consist with the spirit of brotherly love. It is deemed, therefore, by all enlightened Christians, that such a spirit of anger or hardness toward brethren is a bar to the privilege of communion by those who indulge in it; and to come to the Lord's table harboring it in their hearts, is a grievous sin against God and the Church.

To this, probably, the apostle alluded when he said to the Ephesians, "Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Eph. iv, 26. He surely did not mean to exhort them to be angry; but if anger, from any real or imaginary offense committed by a brother in Christ, obtruded itself into their feelings, to hasten to have it cast out by Christian labor with the offending brother, and not sin by neglect of so plain a duty. To do it now, "to-day," be-

fore the season of communion, and not let the sun go down upon their wrath, as that would add to their guilt the sin of communing with feelings at variance with their profession of brotherly love.

The same duty is inculcated by our Lord in his sermon on the mount. "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Matt. v, 23, 24. The remarks of Dr. Adam Clarke on this passage, as contained in his commentary, are so appropriate in regard to the practical duty it inculcates, that I am induced to give them entire. He says: "Evil must be nipped in the bud. An unkind thought of another may be the *fountain* of that which leads to *murder*. A Christian, properly speaking, cannot be an enemy to any man; nor is he to consider any man his enemy, without the fullest evidence; for surmises to the prejudice of another can never rest in the bosom of him who has the love of God in his heart, for to him all men are *brethren*. He sees all men as the children of God, and members of Christ, or at

least capable of becoming such. If a tender, forgiving spirit was required, even in a *Jew*, when he approached God's altar with a bullock or a lamb, how much more necessary is this in a man who professes to be a follower of the *Lamb of God*, especially when he receives the symbols of that sacrifice which was offered for the life of the world, in what is commonly called the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

"*Leave there thy gift at the altar.* This is as much as to say, 'Do not attempt to bring any offering to God while thou art in a spirit of enmity against any person, or hast any difference with thy neighbor which thou hast not used thy diligence to get adjusted.' It is our duty and interest to bring our gift, and offer it too; but God will not accept of any act of religious worship from us while any enmity subsists in our hearts toward any soul of man; or while any subsists in our neighbor's heart toward us, which we have not used the proper means to remove. A religion the very essence of which is *love*, cannot suffer at its altars a heart that is revengeful and uncharitable, or which does not use its utmost endeavors to revive love in the heart of another.'

We see in this precept how our Lord connects the duty of self-examination with communion at his table, and makes the communion an occasion for such examination. It is so evident that everything contrary to love in the heart is inconsistent with that love, that oneness of heart and soul which we profess in communing with the people of God, that it would seem no sincere Christian could think of coming to the Lord's table without examining his heart to see if anything contrary to this Christian grace might be harbored in it. This rule is recognized as of vital importance by the Church, as is evident from the language of invitation to communicants in the form of service. "Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort, and make your humble confession to Almighty God." "And are in love and charity with your neighbors," implies no enmity or bitterness of spirit toward any one. And it implies especially that there is no disaffection or hardness

toward any Christian brother, to interrupt the glow of affection between the children of God which brotherly love produces.

As a right understanding of this rule is of great importance to those who desire to serve God acceptably in his ordinances, it ought to engage our particular and very serious attention. It is quite evident that it has been too generally misapprehended, and consequently misapplied, by professing Christians, much to their own injury, and that of the cause of God and the peace and prosperity of the Church.

It seems to have grown into an axiom, that if a member of the Church has aught against another member, or has knowledge or suspicion of wrong in another which is inconsistent with brotherly love, it is just cause for his refraining from coming to the Lord's table, and this rule is appealed to in justification of so doing. In such cases we hear them say, "I cannot commune" with that brother or that sister, "for he" or she "has injured me;" or he or she "entertains hardness against me;" or he or she "has been guilty of" such a "wrong," or such "wickedness;" or there is something in his or her spirit

or practice that is inconsistent with a profession of religion. And they refer seriously to these words of our blessed Lord, to justify them in refusing to come to his table with such persons, as if it were a matter of conscience with them. Now it must be evident to all that if the rule does not justify such an application of it, the practice thus deduced from it must be extremely injurious to all who adopt it, and to the cause of God and the Church.

What, then, does the rule enjoin as our duty in this matter? First, it enjoins that we faithfully examine *our own hearts*, and review *our own lives*, to ascertain whether there be anything in either contrary to the law of love, or which may be a cause of offense to a Christian brother. Bear in mind it is not said "That THOU hast aught against thy brother," namely, dost know or suspect aught in him that is wrong; but "that thy brother hath aught against THEE," that is, that there is aught in thy spirit or conduct which is cause of offense to any brother, or brethren, or the whole Church, being contrary to that charity which is the bond of Christian union, and therefore productive of alienation of affection, disunion,

and consequent loss of the spirit of piety If, after a faithful and impartial self-examination, anything appear in thy spirit or conduct that is a barrier to an open and unrestrained communion with the brethren, the way to remove it is clear and easy, and within thy power. Go at once to the brother, or brethren, against whom thou hast entertained unbrotherly feelings, or committed an unbrotherly act, and frankly confess it. If the hearts of those whom thou hast wronged be right, they will receive thy confession as evidence of the sincerity of thy professions, and brotherly love and confidence will be restored. What infinite mischief has resulted to the cause of God, and the purity and peace of his Church, by a neglect of professors in this respect. Let it be borne in mind that the sacrament, as a communion, furnishes an occasion, by divine appointment, to call up our attention every time it occurs to our duty in this matter.

In the second place, the rule implies that if we have aught against a brother, that is, know or believe anything in his spirit or conduct which is contrary to the Gospel, we endeavor, in a Christian way, to have it removed before com-

muning with him. We are so much disposed to neglect this duty of endeavoring to recover an offending brother from the error of his way, by personal labor with him, and thus permitting the leaven of sin and the spirit of alienation to work till recovery is impracticable, that we need just such a stimulant as this rule furnishes to prompt us periodically to it. To commune with those who are in the practice of wickedness, or the unrestrained indulgence of wrong passions, without showing our disapproval of these things, by all the means we can use in a Christian manner to reclaim them, renders us liable to the imputation of sanctioning them in our hearts, or at least not deeming them inconsistent with our profession as Christians. Besides, they are a barrier to the exercise of that brotherly affection toward them which is implied in that oneness of heart and soul which distinguishes the members of the household of God as a peculiar people. There is no greater evidence of the true spirit of love in our own hearts than to bear the cross in this matter, and endeavor, by faithful personal labor with offending brethren, to restore them to God and the Church. And this

duty is so imperious, that the rule enjoins, when we are about to approach the table of the Lord, that if we remember that there are those toward whom we have not discharged it, we pause and defer our privilege of communing till we have discharged it. It does not follow that we must be deprived of communing at all. No person is prepared for communion who does not think of preparing, a sufficient length of time before the season for it, to attend to all these duties. Indeed, those who are rightly disposed will feel the importance of a daily preparation from one season to another. And all evangelical Churches have their special occasions, covenant-meetings, class-meetings, etc., for the convenience of their members in this matter. If, after all, the offending member keep out of the way, or cannot be seen or labored with, and we have done all we can to restore him, we may come and offer our gift. It is our duty to do so. But we must come with a clear conscience that we have done all we could to reclaim our offending brethren, and restore the spirit of brotherly love. Our self-examination, preparatory to communion, includes in it a faithful inquiry, in the fear and

love of God, whether we have discharged our whole duty in this matter toward those who are going astray. If we have, we can approach the table of the Lord with a peaceful heart and quiet conscience. If not, we are under the same disability to please God in this service, and to be profited by it, that other acts of disobedience or sin would occasion.

If the offending brethren with whom we labor remain impenitent, and will not be reclaimed, the sin of severing the bond of union is with them; we have delivered our souls, and may continue our communion with Christ and the Church, without suffering any injury to our souls on account of the presence of transgressors more than if they had no part in it.

But toward impenitent transgressors our duty is not ended when our utmost personal efforts to reclaim them have failed. As our individual right does not include authority to exclude any member from the Church, so our individual duties do not include the expulsion of any, whatever cause may exist for their being expelled. This belongs to the Church. When, therefore, we have done all by personal labor

that the Gospel requires us to do, if we fail to succeed, our next step of duty is to report the case to the Church, and, as members of the body, to do our part toward administering its discipline in excluding them from it. This is the duty of every member of the Church, as much as to pray or give alms, or attend to the ordinances. And let none suppose that they can, for any imaginary cause, neglect it, or especially interpose barriers in the way of those who are called to do it, and retain the favor and approbation of God. "If he neglect to hear them," said the Saviour, "tell it to the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Matt. xviii, 17. And Paul says, respecting those who were guilty of offenses inconsistent with their profession as Christians: "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any

man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no not to eat. Therefore put away from among you that wicked person." 1 Cor. v, 7–9, 11, 13. Thus it is the duty to exclude from the Church and its privileges those who transgress the laws of purity and love, and not to continue to commune with them lest, like leaven, their impurity and ungodliness contaminate the whole body. But this work of discipline must be performed in the spirit of love; and in this way only can the Church fulfill the injunction not to eat with improper communicants.

But, beloved reader, this is quite a different thing from leaving the table of the Lord in their possession, and neglecting to commune on their account. If the wrong conduct or wrong spirit of another be a reason why we should not commune with him, and we ourselves leave the table of the Lord as the only or proper means of avoiding such communion, it is placing our privilege and duty in the hands of others, and handing over the ordinance itself to their control. Admit that the rule justifies the course of

those who say, "I cannot commune with that brother because I cannot fellowship him as a Christian," or "because he is guilty of unchristian practices," or "indulges in unchristian tempers," and they keep away from communion on that account, and what would be the result? Plainly this: if all were to act in the same way, as they ought to if the rule enjoins it, the table of the Lord would be deserted by the children of God, and left in possession of those who would only profane it. This was never designed by the Saviour. The duty habitually to commune is imperatively binding upon all Christians. "This do," said the blessed Redeemer, "in remembrance of me." It is your duty; it is your privilege. Neglect it not on any account. Though a Judas be there and you know it, do not withdraw from the Lord's table; but, having done your duty toward him, and leaving him to be sent to his own place, by the means appointed for the excision of such, in an orderly way, partake of the sacred feast to your comfort. Or, though one come in not having on a wedding garment, let him not drive you away who have it. In due time, and in an orderly way, he may

be excluded. But do not abandon the feast, and surrender your privilege to such. Does not the rule, and the instructions of the Saviour respecting the ordinance of the supper, clearly indicate that such would be his language, if he were to speak audibly from heaven to his followers on the subject. Let this excuse for neglecting the ordinance, then, be forever excluded from your thoughts. It involves the double guilt of neglecting the plain command, "This do in remembrance of me;" and also the duty of that Christian labor with offending brethren which the Saviour enjoins. Christians! think of these things. The Master said, "Then come and offer thy gift." There is no provision to justify a neglect of it on any account.

The sum of the whole is, that in order to be prepared for communion at the Lord's table, every Christian must attend to his own heart and life, and see to it that there is nothing in either contrary to love to God and the brethren —nothing that would weaken Christian confidence and brotherly affection, if the secrets of his soul were laid open to the view of all. This love to God and his children implies also love

to all men; not indeed that brotherly love which is the bond that unites the children of God together, and is therefore peculiar, but that love which Christ commends when he directs us to love our enemies, and which St. Paul so beautifully describes in the thirteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians. This is understood by being in love and charity with our neighbors. And if, on a close and faithful examination into the state of our own hearts before God, we find that we are possessed of the love to God, to our brethren, and to all men, which the Gospel requires, we may come to the feast the Lord has provided for his people, and no one has a right to prevent us.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER CONSIDERED AS A SACRAMENT.

This term, as applied to the Eucharist, is not found in the Scriptures. It was, however, employed at a very early period in the primitive Church to designate that ordinance. It was used by Pliny, the Roman governor, in his epistle to the Emperor Trajan, as expressive of one of the acts which characterized the worship of the Christians, as they affirmed, at their religious meetings. Whether it originated with him, because it was the most appropriate term he could employ to convey a correct idea of the act, and its design, as explained to him by the Christians themselves, and afterward adopted by the Church because of its appropriateness, or was already in use by them and adopted by him, it is not important at this time to inquire. It is enough to know that to an intelligent Roman governor, such as Pliny certainly was, there was

that in the term itself, and, if so, most certainly in an act that would suggest the term as most fitting to describe it, which was calculated to invest the ordinance with a degree of sacredness more than attaches to a mere rite or memorial.

SACRAMENT, among the Romans, was a military oath, which every soldier, on entering the service of his country, was obliged to take, of fidelity and obedience to his general. This element of a sacrament was clearly observable in the act of partaking of the Lord's Supper by the disciples. They were understood to take upon themselves, in the most solemn manner, the obligation of fidelity and obedience to their divine Master, or rather to renew this obligation every time they partook of it. With this view of the ordinance as a sacrament, there is every reason to believe the primitive Christians were deeply impressed. And its practical tendency is of so much importance, that the specific purpose for which this work is written seems to demand a more enlarged notice of it here.

Let it be remembered, then, that though the term *sacrament* is not found in the Scriptures, the relations and duties which it implies are

clearly set forth there. Jesus Christ is the "Captain of our salvation." Heb. ii, 10. We are "soldiers" in his service. 2 Tim. ii, 3. As such we are pledged to obey and serve him. We were never accepted of him until we surrendered ourselves wholly to serve and obey him. That was the most solemn religious act we ever performed. We felt then that we were thenceforward "not our own," but belonged to Him who died for us, and rose again, and that the surrender of ourselves to his service was not a mere promise that we would obey and serve him, but a promise partaking of the nature of an oath. It was a solemn pledge to be his forever. We are therefore to partake of this sacrament with the fact distinctly impressed upon our minds, that it is equivalent to a solemn oath of fidelity and obedience to our Lord and Master, during the whole of the warfare into which he has called us. That the primitive Christians so viewed it, is evident from the strictness and integrity with which they continued to profess their faith in him, and to do all things whatsoever he had commanded them, though they were persecuted even unto death. They took joyfully

the spoiling of their goods, and submitted to the most cruel tortures and painful martyrdom, rather than defile their consciences by a violation of their vows of fidelity and obedience to their Saviour. Let Christians ponder these things in their hearts, and with such examples of fidelity and obedience to inspire their zeal and devotion, endeavor so to partake of the holy sacrament, that they may gain strength thereby more firmly to fight the battles of the Lord, and do his will in all things.

But as a sacrament the ordinance involves another idea, which is calculated greatly to console and edify those who observe it understandingly, and with a right disposition of heart. It is a *covenant* rite in which God pledges his covenant mercies to those who worthily partake of it, as they pledge their faith in the sacrificial offering of Christ for sin, and fidelity and obedience to him, in partaking of it. In the language of the Church of England, as set forth in her articles of religion, "Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace, and God's

will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him." All Protestant evangelical Churches hold substantially the same. The Eucharist is such a sacrament, ordained by Christ. As it has been usual among men in all ages to confirm covenants by visible and solemn forms, so God, in entering into covenant engagements with men, "has condescended to the same method of affording, on his part, sensible assurance of his fidelity, and to require the same from them. Thus, circumcision was the sign and seal of the covenant with Abraham; and when the great covenant of grace was made in the Son of God with all nations, it was agreeable to this analogy to expect that he would institute some constantly recurring visible sign, in confirmation of his mercy to us, which should encourage our reliance upon his promises, and have the force of a perpetual renewal of the covenant between the parties."* Such is the institution of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

But, to be more particular, the sacrament is

* Rev. Richard Watson.

both a SIGN and a SEAL. As a *sign*, it represents the body and blood of Christ, broken and shed, as we have before noticed, for the remission of sins; or, in other words, "Christ crucified," as a *propitiatory* offering for the sins of the world. It is a declaration, addressed to the senses by significant emblems, of the same doctrines of the atonement by Jesus Christ, and the promises and benefits which that atonement has procured for us, which the written word of God exhibits, but in a manner to bring these great truths more vividly to excite our faith and affect our hearts.

It exhibits, first, the infinite love of God to the world, in giving "his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii, 16. It exhibits, also, the unbounded love of Christ, "who died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." 1 Pet. iii, 18. It exhibits and portrays his extreme sufferings, his mangled body and shed blood, his agony in the garden, and his death upon the cross. In all this he is seen through the emblems presented to the senses of the receiver, as a sacrificial offering for us,

"wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities," Isaiah liii, 5; in "virtue of which only a covenant of grace was entered into with man by the offended God." It presents also, to the mind of the humble recipient, a lively representation of the benefits derived from it through faith, namely, "remission of sins," and nourishment of the soul in spiritual life and vigor, by virtue of communion with Christ, according to his word, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him." John vi, 56.

The acts and words as used by Christ when he instituted this ordinance, would not of themselves be sufficient to teach us the great and edifying truths it is designed symbolically to represent. But they are as parts of a grand picture, selected and arranged by infinite wisdom, to present at one view the whole plan of our redemption, as revealed in the word of God, and the benefits it confers upon us, if we will accept of them on the terms proposed in the Gospel.

I need scarcely say here that this sacrament, as a sign of the new covenant, excludes the

popish dogma, that it contains in itself, and by the will and intention of the consecrating priest, conveys to the recipient of it, the grace it signifies. Protestants must lose their senses before they can close with such an absurdity. If the real body and blood of Christ be present in the elements, then, as that dogma teaches, *they* are the *sacrifice*, instead of *Christ*, and these visible material substances contain in themselves all the merit and efficacy from which grace and pardon flow, and they cannot therefore be a *sign* of what they are themselves. When, at the original institution of the ordinance, Jesus said of the bread, "This is my body," and of the wine, "This is my blood," the disciples, whose eyes then saw him, and whose ears then heard the words he spake, knew that he did not mean his body and blood *literally;* and certainly not his *broken* body and *shed* blood, for his body had not been broken nor his blood shed. They knew, and ever after understood, that he meant to say, "These are, and in this rite shall ever be understood to be, a *sign* or *emblem* of my body broken for you, and my blood shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins." As a sign,

therefore, and not the real body and blood of Christ, the bread and wine cannot contain any grace or efficacy to benefit the receiver. Believing that none for whose benefit this work is intended will be in danger of being led astray by any tendency of their minds toward a reliance for grace and salvation upon the *sign*, to the neglect of the *thing signified*, it may not be necessary to add anything further on this point.

There is more danger of leaning to the opposite extreme, and so losing the spiritual benefits of the ordinance by reducing it to a level with other mere rites and ceremonies of religion, which have not the essential characteristics of a sacrament. We may receive the ordinance as a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, and as emblematical of what is spiritual and invisible, and thus be led to cherish pious reflections and sentiments, which may be mistaken for "grace in the heart" by the moral influence upon our minds which such meditations as a serious observance of this rite is calculated to excite. All this is right and proper as far as it goes. The sacrament is emblematical; it is adapted to excite pious sentiments which are consistent with the

highest state of grace and holiness; and it has been shown at large in another part of this treatise that it is and was intended by its author to be a perpetual memorial of his death until he should come to judge the world. But if this were all that is implied in the ordinance it would fail to be a *sacrament*, and come short of the end for which it was instituted. Our views must penetrate deeper than this into the sacred mystery in order to derive all the benefit from it which it was designed to convey to those who meekly receive it in a right manner.

Speaking of both sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, Mr. Watson, in his Theological Institutes, says: "As SIGNS, they are visible and symbolical expositions of what the Article of the Church of England, above quoted, calls 'the grace of God, and his will,' that is, his 'good-will toward us;' or, according to the Church of Scotland, 'significations of the benefits of his mediation;' that is, they exhibit to the senses, under appropriate emblems, the same benefits as are exhibited in another form in the doctrines and promises of the word of God, so that 'the eye may affect and instruct the heart,' and that

for the strong incitement of our faith, our desire, and our gratitude."

All serious persons know and feel how possible it is to peruse the sacred Scriptures, and permit the eye to pass over the "doctrines and promises" they contain, without being deeply affected by them. When we read the Bible as a mere form or custom, without attention or concern as to our personal interest in what it contains, it is as a dead letter to us, producing neither instruction nor edification. "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James i, 25. Such a man searches the Scriptures with a desire to be benefited by their instructions. He believes that they are "able to make him wise unto salvation, (2 Tim. iii, 15;) and, as his soul thirsteth for salvation, with earnest solicitude and diligent care he looks for the healing waters in the sacred word. And he is not disappointed. He sees there the "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness." Zech. xiii, 1. Everywhere he is pointed to "Christ and him crucified" as the only foundation of his hope. In all the doctrines

promises, types, and shadows, he discovers tokens and signs which exhibit a Redeemer and a Saviour, such as he needs and his soul desires. To him the word has become a rich and exhaustless treasure. He never tires in perusing it. "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Psa. i, 2. He has the word of God "in his heart as a fire." Jer. xx, 9. "The word of Christ dwells in him richly in all wisdom." Col. iii, 16. The word, in which Christ is set forth as a propitiatory offering for the sins of the world, "a mediator of the new covenant," (Heb. xii, 24,) an advocate for sinners at the right hand of the Father," (1 John, ii, 1,) "a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens," (Heb. iv, 14,) who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," and "is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him," (Heb. viii, 25,) is the mirror in which he sees the atoning victim as "all in all" to him. Thus "beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord," he is "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii, 18. He feels that this word, mixed with faith in them that hear it, has a renovating and transforming

power; that it is a life-giving and life-sustaining word; and he feasts upon it to satisfy the cravings of his soul, as a hungry man does upon the provisions of his table to meet the demands of his physical nature.

So, also, in regard to the sacrament, we may partake of it from custom, or because it is a prescribed duty, as a mere form, without deriving any benefit from it. If we fail to perceive the significance of the sign, or take no interest in it other than to comply with the command of Christ to do this in remembrance of him, it will be profitless to us, though we may be constant and uniform in observing it. We may go still farther and be at most only partially benefited by it. If we view the sign as only a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, designed to bring up into our minds the history of those events, and excite such pious reflections and meditations as a vivid presentation of them would be calculated to do, and even the sympathy and affection for an innocent suffering friend, which such a fresh picture of his sufferings would naturally inspire, we shall derive but a partial benefit from it.

We may penetrate still deeper into the mystery, and recognize in those symbols presented to the eye and the taste, a sign or memorial of the sufferings of Christ as the *Redeemer* of the world, and cherish all the feelings of gratitude and love to him which the remembrance of his condescending goodness in thus suffering for a guilty world, and achieving its redemption by it, would beget in our feeling hearts, and yet fail to receive the full benefit the ordinance was designed to impart; for it is, after all, only as a memorial of what is *past*, and not a sign of him as a *present*, almighty Saviour. In this sense, let it be remembered, is the sign intended to represent our crucified Redeemer to the believing soul. As such it is received by faith, faith in our hearts with thanksgiving. And thus the ordinance, as a sign or picture presented to the eye, answers the same end as the written word; as in it we "behold the glory of the Lord," and experience its transforming influence and edifying efficacy in our hearts.

But what is this "glory of the Lord," so impressively presented in the sacrament? It is that in which he appears as a triumphant conqueror,

whose "right hand and holy arm hath gotten him the victory," (Psa. xcviii, i;) the glory with which he was glorified by his death upon the cross, as he said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." John xvii, 1. As a Redeemer and Mediator, his peculiar glory is that he appears, even in the midst of the throne, "a lamb as it had been slain." Rev. v, 6. So he appears to the multitude around the throne, "clothed with white robes," who cry "with a loud voice, saying, SALVATION to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Rev. vii, 10. And so he appears to his followers on earth, who by faith behold him in his triumphal glory as their Redeemer and Mediator, the merit of whose passion and death continues to prevail for them, and for all the world, as effectually as it did for his disciples the hour he suffered upon the cross. He is viewed by believing recipients of the holy sacrament as a "lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. xiii, 8. Their faith apprehends him as a *present* Saviour, whose blood *now* avails for them, and is *now*, as it has been at all times from the beginning, efficacious for

the remission of sins and salvation of men. Hence, the sacrament is not, to those who receive it understandingly and with faith, a mere commemoration of the passion and death of Christ, as an event that is *past*, but a recognition of that sacrifice as a propitiatory offering for them, as really efficacious *now*, by his presence and advocacy for them before the Father, as it was when he exclaimed upon the cross, "It is finished!" Thus, with Paul, they "glory in the cross of Christ"—in "Christ crucified;" and they receive the ordinance as significant of that sacrifice which he made for them upon the cross, and of him as an abiding sacrificial offering for sin, in the character of a "mediator of the new covenant," who "ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. vii, 25.

How precious to the believer's heart is such a view of the Saviour! In the bread that is broken he sees a sign of the body of Christ; in the act of its being broken, a sign of the crucifixion to which he submitted to expiate sin: in the wine he sees a representation of the blood of Christ; and in the act of its being poured out, the shedding of his blood for the remission of sins. These

things, though significant as visible signs of invisible things, might not, indeed, alone and unaccompanied by the words of the Saviour in the institute, call up into the mind the expiatory offering of Christ's body upon the cross for us, or suggest him to us as our Mediator and Advocate,

"The bleeding sacrifice"

at the right hand of the Father. But when we hear him say, "This is my body," and "This is my blood," we are shut up to the one soul-inspiring thought, that it is an instituted sign of his body and blood, in all the interesting aspects in which he is set forth in the written word of God, as having been "delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification." Rom. iv, 25.

But this ordinance, as a sacrament, includes also the idea of the presence of Christ as a party to the "covenant," of which it is the ratifying seal, as well as a sign. And as a sign, it is significant of the manner in which he manifests his presence. This is evidently a spiritual manifestation. And such the Scriptures represent it to be. The Roman Catholic doctrine claims a real

presence of the body and blood in the consecrated elements. The ordinance, in that case, would cease to be a sign or a seal, representing the body and blood of Christ, and the grace they impart, as it would involve the absurdity that the real substance is a symbol or representation of itself. But there is a more rational and Scriptural sense in which Christ is present, and his presence recognized by believing hearts at the sacramental feast of communion with his people.

The Lord said to Moses: "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen; in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. Exod. xx, 24. And Christ himself said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. xviii, 20. What language can be more positive and explicit than this? Christians who assemble to commemorate the passion and death of their Lord and Saviour, in obedience to his explicit command, must be considered as being "gathered together *in his name*, that is, by his sanction, authority, or direction, in a sense which can ad-

mit of no doubt as to its being embraced in the declaration, "There am I in the midst of them." And if there be only "two or three"—two even —the administrator, to consecrate the elements and administer the ordinance, and the recipient, who may be a pining invalid in a dark and dreary cellar or garret, to receive it, the declaration is the same: "There am I in the midst of them."

Now, with the mind resting upon the declaration, "There am I," and firmly believing it as we believe every other clearly expressed and positive declaration of our Lord, it remains to settle the question, In what sense is he there? We cannot believe he is there, in the sense of the Catholics, as identical with the bread and wine. Our senses contradict it. Nor do we look for him in his bodily form, as he appeared at different times to his disciples, before his ascension into heaven. He has never so appeared among his people since that event. Nor are we satisfied with that low view of this delightful and soul-comforting declaration, which represents it as meaning nothing more than a presence in the minds of those who are drawn, by the circumstance of their being

assembled in his name, to think of him with more attention and interest than they are wont to do at other times; or, at most, as the presence of a king or magistrate, at courts established within their jurisdiction, by their authority and sanction merely. This idea does not come up to what is clearly implied in the terms used by our blessed Lord. Nor is it necessary to resort to so meager an interpretation of those words, spoken for the encouragement and comfort of all who should believe on him, to avoid the absurdity of believing in the dogma of transubstantiation. No; his presence is elsewhere promised as a *manifestation* of himself to his people, in a manner to assure them of it. First, directly to his disciples: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will *manifest* myself to him. If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John xiv,

18, 20, 23. Again, in his prayer for his followers, on the same night in which he was betrayed: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil;" and he adds: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." John xvii, 11–21. Thus, as his presence was with them, as "God manifested in the flesh," while he was in the world, so it was promised to be with them, by "manifestation of the Spirit," after he should go to the Father. His declaration, then, "There am I," means simply in the Spirit.

To believers in the doctrine of the Trinity and the gift of the Holy Ghost, according to the Scriptures, all these declarations and promises of the indwelling presence of the Father and the Son are consistent with the analogy of their faith, and understood as the mystery that Paul

preached to the Gentiles, "which is," said he, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. i, 27. Or, as it is elsewhere stated: "Ye are the temple of the living God; as he hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." 2 Cor. vi, 16.

This indwelling of Christ, by the Holy Ghost, constitutes the spiritual life of the Christian. "Nevertheless I live," said Paul; "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. ii, 20. "The children of God, being born of the Spirit, have a spiritual nature, whose wants, being spiritual, can be supplied only by the Spirit, and in a spiritual manner. They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." Rom. viii, 5. The life of the body is sustained, nourished, and strengthened by food; and our physical nature is constituted with appetites which crave and seek the food needful for it. So is the spiritual life of the "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," sustained, nourished, and strengthened by spiritual

food; and there are also spiritual appetites which crave and seek this food. This analogy is found everywhere in the Scriptures. It is seen in all those passages where the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is set forth under the notion of a feast, and the hungry and needy are invited to come and eat. Such allusions are abundant in both the Old and New Testaments. It is also expressively indicated in the language of our Lord: "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matt. v, 6. But more especially is it set forth in that memorable discourse which he uttered concerning himself, as contained in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. Verily, verily, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living

bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever." John vi, 27–58.

This discourse of our Lord contains so many expressions analogous to the words he used in the institution of the sacrament, that we are led to suppose there is some designed connection between the two. The doctrines taught, and the practical tendency of those doctrines, appear to be so similar, that we naturally conclude both were intended to teach the same lesson, and impress upon the mind and heart the same ideas connected with our salvation.

But what is that lesson? The sum is, that eternal life is procured for us, and imparted to us, through the death and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ; that he came and suffered for us, "that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly." John x, 10.

But it may be profitable to consider more particularly the prominent points of this wonderful discourse. Can the words have a *literal* meaning? Surely not. Christ never was bread *literally;* and the senses of all who saw him precluded the possibility of their supposing that he so intended to represent himself. He called himself "bread," *figuratively*, because of his answering to the spiritual wants of the soul, the same purposes of sustaining, nourishing, and strengthening its life, as bread does in sustaining, nourishing, and strengthening the life of the body. He represents himself as the bread which *came* down from heaven, denoting his taking a body in which he suffered for our sins. But the burden of his discourse is, that he is the bread which *cometh* down from heaven, denoting that, in his true character as a mediator, he is a never-failing source to meet the spiritual wants of those who

receive him by faith. And the same glorious truth is contained in the promissory portions of the discourse. "He that *cometh* to me shall never hunger." "Whoso *eateth* my flesh, and *drinketh* my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." But the expression, "The bread that I will give is my flesh," is almost synonymous with "This is my body which is broken for you;" and it indicates that the provision of the spiritual food which is given for the life and nourishment of the soul, is so essentially connected with and proceeds from the sacrificial offering he made of himself for sin, that it is needful always to have the mind fully impressed with the idea of his being "put to death in the flesh," to exercise that faith which will be acceptable to him.

And here we are brought to see how the sacrament is significant, not only of the sufferings of Christ upon the cross, indicating the manner of those sufferings, but also "a sign of grace and God's will toward us, by which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him," as the Church of England has it; or, as

t is expressed by the Church of Scotland, adapted "to signify, seal, and exhibit, to those within the covenant of grace, the benefits of his mediation."

As a sign of the *grace* by which God doth invisibly work in us, it is effectual in suggesting the life-giving and life-sustaining power of that grace, imparting life and spiritual vigor to our souls; and also of the evidence we have in ourselves that he does so work. When we look upon the bread and the wine we are reminded of the body and the blood of Christ, for he has expressly told us that these are designed in the institution to represent his body and blood. When we see the bread broken and the wine poured out, we are reminded that his body was torn and broken upon the cross, and his blood poured forth from his wounds, as a propitiatory offering for the sins of the world. When we take, and eat and drink, by another sense—the sense of tasting—we are reminded of the grace which flows from Christ, through the Spirit, to the nourishing and strengthening of our souls. As bread and wine, objects visible to the eye, by the operation of the God of providence, affect the taste and work invisibly in sustaining the

life of those who eat and drink them, so grace is a realization, a living power which works within us, delightful to the taste and edifying to the soul. Every act and every word, as exhibited in the institution of the ordinance, is significant of the power and grace of God, manifested in the spiritual life of the "new man in Christ Jesus." Are we exhorted to "*taste* and see that the Lord is good?" (Psal. xxxiv, 8;) or to "eat that which is good, and let our soul delight itself in fatness?" (Isa. lv, 2;) the meaning is, to seek spiritual nourishment for our souls. And when those who have been regenerated are represented as having "*tasted* that the Lord is gracious," (1 Pet. ii, 3,) or, in still stronger terms, "*tasted* the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," (Heb. vi, 5,) who does not understand the sense to be a spiritual experience and realization of the grace of God communicated to the believing soul through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ? How significant, then, is the sacrament, as a sign of that grace by which God works invisibly in those that believe, to refresh, nourish, and strengthen them. In this sense, therefore, according to his declaration, he is present with his

people—present in his Spirit, to nourish and strengthen their souls, as the sign, bread, is present and eaten to nourish and strengthen the body. A mere commemoration of God's goodness in providing bread for the hungry, will not impart strength to a starving man; he must "*taste*"—"*eat*"—to satisfy his craving desire. So would not Christ be the "bread of God," which the soul needs, if he were not "the living bread" that "*cometh* down from heaven," and present to "satisfy every longing soul" that believes in him.

It is important that we have a clear understanding of this point, to avoid confounding the sign with the thing signified, and thus depriving ourselves of the benefit we might otherwise experience from a right observance of the ordinance. Let us, then, carefully distinguish in our minds between the parts composed and how they are composed. The bread, and its adaptation to sustain and strengthen the life of the body, is one part; Christ as a sacrificial offering for the world, and his power and grace as the source and support of the life of the soul, the other. The bread is not the life of the body, nor a sign

or representative of the life of the body. But it is adapted to sustain life, when eaten, by a mysterious and invisible power with which the Creator has invested it; and we eat bread for the purpose of sustaining life and gaining strength, not because we perceive in it anything which indicates its use for this purpose, but solely on the ground that experience has taught us that such is the case. When, therefore, the life and nourishment of the body alone concern us, our thoughts are limited to a consideration of bread and its adaptation, by the God of providence, to sustain and nourish the life of the body. This, which is familiar to all persons, is the ground of the comparison by which the sacrament is received as a sign, not of itself, but of what it figuratively represents. In itself it has no virtue or efficacy to nourish or strengthen the soul, more than an ordinary meal. But it *represents* Christ as the bread of life, according to his word; and when received with faith in this revelation which he has made of himself, affording us the same assurance that this mystical bread is given to sustain and strengthen the life of the soul, as our experience does that "our daily bread" is

given to sustain and strengthen the life of the body; our thoughts are directed to the spiritua view of the thing signified, taking "Christ crucified" as the "living bread," and embracing in our meditations all the benefits of his atonement and mediation, which we experience through "feasting on him by faith in our hearts," analogous to those we realize to meet our physical wants and cravings by eating bread. Thus much for the sacrament as a sign.

Let it be observed, then, that the sign consists in a comparison of spiritual things with those that are natural, by which they are seen to have some resemblance the one to the other. And these must be kept distinct in the mind, in order to understand the import and design of the institution, and be profited by it. It requires no violent effort to direct our thoughts in the right train in this matter. If we begin right, and with a right understanding of the use and design of such figurative language as is employed in the institution of the ordinance, the process is natural and easy, and the result is almost instantaneous. We see, and taste, and feel the influence of the mental operation in the

apprehension of the spiritual objects these natural and sensible signs are designed to represent, with so much rapidity and so little effort, that we are scarcely conscious of anything but the result in confirming our faith concerning the thing signified.

This view of the institution of the Lord's Supper is well illustrated by the parable of the sower, as contained in the eighth chapter of Luke, and elsewhere. That parable was designed to explain the spiritual nature of the Gospel, and its influences in producing the fruits of righteousness in those who received it "into good and honest hearts." Here the process of thought was commenced by the presentation of a sower, with his sack of seed sowing it in his field, an object so often visible to men's eyes that it was familiar to all acquainted with the rural pursuits of field husbandry. From this point the mind would naturally run to think of the growth of the seed, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Mark iv, 28. An abstract theorist might, indeed, linger to philosophize upon the mystery of its germination and growth, in a way to bewilder

and distract his mind, so as to disqualify it for such a reception of the truth as renders it instructive and edifying to "good and honest hearts" into which it is received. But our Lord did not deliver his discourses to gratify speculating philosophers, but to instruct and edify those who were disposed to "learn" of him with meekness and humility. Upon the minds of such, the facts set forth in the parable, intended to illustrate the doctrine which he desired to inculcate by it, flashed, with the rapidity of intuition, after the first distinct object, the sower sowing seed in his field, had taken sufficient possession of them. The sowing of seed upon unbroken soil, as a road rendered hard by the tread of man and beast passing over it; or upon stony ground, with no depth of soil to sustain its growth; or soil already preoccupied with weeds, which, if permitted to remain, would grow up and choke the good seed, and defeat the object of the sower; these points, I say, would present themselves to the minds of unsophisticated hearers with such distinctness and force as to take entire possession of them, and engross for the time all their powers of reflection. The

next thing which would engage their attention and interest their thoughts would be the sure, though it might be various, result of sowing good seed in a good and well cultivated soil, where neither the hardness of the surface, nor the rock underneath, nor the neglected weeds, would prevent its growth. The practical tendency of these thoughts, superinduced by a presentation of the prominent points of the parable thus far, would be, in those influenced by merely secular considerations, to induce them to sow good seed only in good ground.

These thoughts, taking possession of the mind by the presentation to it of the sower, the seed, and the varieties of soil in which it was sown, would naturally suggest a consecutive train of reflections, such as the secret process by which the production of the seed sown is brought about; the benefit and necessity of the fruit of it to sustain life and meet the wants of our physical being; its adaptation to gratify the cravings of hunger, and to refresh and comfort those who are so happy as to obtain a competency of it, with all the other benefits which it produces for our good. Here the mind of one

influenced by no higher considerations than the benefits which good husbandry, guided by the known operations of natural laws in producing fruit from the seed that is sown, will produce for our physical well-being, would rest quietly, delighted with such a lesson of instruction on a subject of interest to him. But this was not the lesson our Lord intended to teach, nor any part of it. The truths set forth by the parable were well understood by those before whom he uttered it; and because they were well understood by them, and familiar to them, he uttered them in explicit and impressive language in their hearing, that they might make a fresh and vivid impression upon their minds, and prepare them for the spiritual instruction he was about to impart to them, of truths and realities of which these were only symbols or significant representations.

Thus he said, in explaining the parable: "The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which

for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." Luke viii, 11.

Let it be understood that this parable is not adduced as explaining the nature of the sacrament as such. There are several things in the institution of that ordinance, and essential to it as a sacrament, which are peculiar to it, and nothing else contained in the Scriptures, or elsewhere, can explain it as a whole. As such it has no symbol or archetype. It stands alone, a monument of the wisdom of Him who ordained it for a special purpose. Perhaps this is all that need be said to guard the reader against the error of taking this illustration for anything more than is intended by it. While it is not pretended that the parable of the sower is sufficient to afford any adequate idea of the institution of the sacrament as a whole, it is believed that it

furnishes a well adapted illustration of its nature and design as a *sign*, symbolically representing the thing signified by it, as already shown at large. And this is a point on which communicants need to be guarded more, perhaps, than any other, for it has been productive of more practical injury than any other.

The important point here is, that we distinguish clearly between the sign and the things signified, so as to place no more reliance upon the former for the benefit we hope to derive from the ordinance, than it is proper to place upon means used to obtain a blessing of which they are no part. Thus there was nothing in the parable uttered by our Lord, in itself considered, calculated to meet the spiritual wants of the world, or comfort the hearts of his disciples. It was merely a declaration of certain truths, touching the manner of providing for our physical wants, and could interest those who heard it only in so far as a sense of their physical wants influenced their feelings. But when the Saviour proceeded to make an application of what he had said concerning temporal things to things *spiritual*, they became interesting to those whose

feelings were pressed by a sense of their spiritual wants; not because any of the sensible objects brought to view by the parable were adapted to meet those wants, but as they were made a means of presenting to their minds those more desirable spiritual benefits, as attainable through grace by the use of such means.

Our Lord's design was most explicitly declared in his explanation of the parable: "The seed *is the word of God.* Those by the way-side, *are they that hear;* then cometh the devil, and taketh the word away out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." And so all through we have his explicit declaration of what he meant by the words he used in the parable, in their spiritual application, and also their symbolical representations, as indicating the things signified. In this case it is morally impossible to interpret the words of our Lord, "The seed is the word of God," etc., *literally.* And yet he so said, as explicitly as he said of the bread he brake and gave to his disciples at the institution of the sacrament, "This is my body." In the parable he meant to be understood as saying, "The seed *represents* the word of God," etc. So

in the institution of the sacrament, he meant to be understood as saying, when he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, "This *represents* my body which is broken for you." The adaptation of these visible objects in both cases, in their nature and effects, to *represent* the things they were used to indicate, was the reason, no doubt, why they were so employed and so applied by the Saviour for that purpose. To be benefited by the ordinance, then, we must distinguish clearly in our minds between the sign and the things signified, and eat and drink by faith in our hearts, with thanksgiving. This faith looks through the sign to the things signified—through the means to the end. It discerns in the visible sign a representation of the Lord's body, according to his word, "This is my body," etc., and also of the grace and benefits derived to the soul when it is received of it in a truly spiritual manner, because of the nature of bread and wine to sustain life and refresh and comfort those who receive them. And applying these outward things to those that are invisible and spiritual, which alone interest the humble communicant when he approaches the Lord's table,

the believing heart of the recipient is refreshed and strengthened, and his faith confirmed, not by the sacrament he receives, or the act of receiving it, but by the grace which God is pleased to bestow upon those who seek it by faith, in the use of this ordinance as a means.

I have dwelt the longer upon this point, because it is to be feared that many, who conscientiously and habitually receive the sacrament, as a duty enjoined upon them by Christ, satisfy themselves with observing it as a mere form. There is no danger, as I have said before, that any who have been instructed in the Protestant faith will be liable to receive it as containing the substance of the real body and blood of Christ, as taught by the Church of Rome. According to their view of it, the sacrament contains the grace it signifies, and leaves no room to look for anything beyond it, to be sought through the use of it as a means. But what better is the practical tendency of receiving the sacrament with no view of its indicating anything beyond it, to be sought through it as a sign, than receiving it with the delusive idea that it contains in itself the grace and benefit we need? In neither

case will the benefit be received. In the latter it will not, because it is conceived by the recipient to be contained in the ordinance, and received by the act of partaking of it; and in the former, because the mind of the receiver is satisfied with a formal observance of the sign, as an act of obedience to the command of Christ, without realizing that the end of its institution was to aid him in obtaining the grace and benefits which it does not contain in itself, but is only an instituted means through which they are to be sought.

God forbid that I should give pain to any professed disciple of the Saviour by an unnecessary expression of doubts as to the manner in which the holy sacrament is habitually received by many in our Protestant Churches. But may it not be profitable for each communicant to examine his own heart, and decide for himself, whether he does not often, perhaps generally, partake of it as a mere matter of form? Whether he does not go to the table of the Lord, receive the symbols of the body and blood of Christ, and return to his home and his business without any consciousness of having had his mind and heart occupied at all with meditations about

the sufferings of Christ, the rich benefits of the atonement, the grace needful to sustain and strengthen his spiritual life, or in fact anything of a higher religious tone or more spiritual tendency than that he has done his duty as a member of the Church, in confessing Christ in his ordinance? If this were all that was designed by the institution, it is no wonder if it should become "a weariness" to us; and we be led to say, "It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances." Mal. iii, 14. Such is the danger of not carefully distinguishing in our minds between the sign and the things signified, and using the former only as a means of aiding us in the way God has appointed, to seek and obtain the latter. It is the bread of life and the wine of the kingdom which our souls need. These spiritual gifts are received by faith. Our faith is aided and invigorated by means of the sacrament as a sign. And as such it is our duty and privilege to observe it habitually, as we are commanded to do; but always only as a means instituted to aid us in seeking the grace we need, lest after a long and unsatisfying course in the observance of it we come too

late to see our error, and are constrained to take up the lamentation:

> "But I of means have made my boast;
> Of means an idol made;
> The spirit in the letter lost,
> The substance, in the shade."

But the *sacramental character* of the Lord's Supper is more particularly indicated by its being a SEAL, as well as a *sign*. Both are necessary to constitute it a *sacrament*. Hence the exclusion from the sacraments, by Protestants, of the five mere rites or ceremonies which the Church of Rome adds to baptism and the Lord's Supper as such, because they were found not to possess these essential elements.

Of the meaning of the term and its application in this connection, it is enough to say that a *seal* is "that which confirms, ratifies, or makes stable." By his seal the sovereign confirms the charter he gives to his subjects, and secures to them the privileges he stipulates to grant them, on condition always that they accept of it, and comply with what it requires of them on their part. Hence the institution of the sacrament was a federal act, as a visible confirmation of

God's covenant with believers, that he would be their God, and secure to them all the blessings promised in the covenant, on condition that they continued steadfast in their love and obedience to him. Thus, under the Old Testament dispensation, was circumcision a seal of God's covenant with Abraham. "And he received the sign of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet in uncircumcision." Rom. iv, 11. That is, being justified and made a partaker of the righteousness which is by faith, he received circumcision as a sign or token of his being in covenant with God; and a seal, as an assurance on God's part, that he accounted him righteous on account of his faith.

It is not important here to inquire how far the sacramental rites of the former dispensation resemble those instituted by our Lord. We need only to be impressed with this interesting truth, that in both God is seen entering into covenant with his people, and exhibiting for their acceptance a visible form of ratifying that covenant, and confirming to those who comply with its conditions the blessings and benefits it promises. What I wish more particularly to have impressed

upon the minds and hearts of professing Christians is the solemn obligations which they on their part enter into by their acceptance and observance of this covenant rite. Those obligations are, willingly and thankfully to accept of the covenant, as significant of the atonement by the vicarious and propitiatory death of Christ, which they must steadfastly believe in order to be saved; a lively exercise of faith in him as a present and all-sufficient Saviour; an unqualified consecration and surrender of themselves to God and his service; love and obedience to Christ as their Master, and "the Captain of their salvation;" and the letting of their light shine before men, that others may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven. This implies a hearty and sincere renunciation of all things else for Christ, and a firm reliance on him, and him alone, for that grace which is necessary to quicken the soul into spiritual life, and to nourish and strengthen it. All these things, let it be remembered, are duties which are binding upon us, whether we acknowledge the obligation to observe them or not. But the peculiar force of the obligation upon those who commune at the

Lord's table is contained in their covenant vows which it implies. This is a point to which we cannot be indifferent without injury to our souls. Christians! you who have been accustomed to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at every convenient opportunity since you first professed faith in him, have you ever seriously considered the solemn import of that act? You speak of it familiarly among yourselves, and to those without, as receiving the sacrament. But did you ever ponder in your hearts what you did, what vows and obligations you took upon yourselves, when you received it? These were, of course, always renewed and reassumed every time you repeated it.

We have already noticed that the sacrament was considered by the primitive disciples of Christ in the light of an OATH. As such they represented it to Pliny, who, in his letter to the Roman emperor, says: "From their affirmations I learned that the sum of all their offense, call it fault or error, was, that on a certain day fixed they used to assemble before sunrise, and sing together, in alternate responses, hymns to Christ as a deity; binding themselves by the solemn

engagements of an *oath* not to commit any manner of wickedness." That there was no form of an oath in use among them on these occasions except the uniform practice of "breaking bread" in a sacramental way, shows clearly that they represented this to the Roman governor as having all the binding force upon their consciences of a deliberate and solemn oath. And so it must be considered by all Christians who view it in a proper light.

This pledge, or solemn vow, is understood to be made, not by one communicant to another, pledging each to the other to do or avoid what they mutually agree among themselves shall be done or avoided by all; but it is by all to their Lord and Master, whom they acknowledge as such, and to whom they pledge themselves to love and obey him with undivided affections and undeviating fidelity all the days of their lives. Of how solemn an import, then, is the holy sacrament to those who view it as a *seal* of God's covenant with his people; and the act of partaking of it as a pledge or oath of fidelity to Christ as their Lord and Master in all things.

But the sacredness of this act is rendered still

more impressive by the fact that the parties to the covenant eat and drink together; or, in other words, signify the sincerity of their professions toward each other; the Master by preparing the feast for his disciples, as a token of his love and good-will toward them, and the disciples eating and drinking in his presence as expressive of their loyalty and love to him. In all ages and all countries pledges made and ratified by the parties eating together have been deemed inviolably sacred. As an instance of this the following circumstance, among many others that might be noticed, has sometimes been quoted: A young nobleman, from Europe, was traveling in the East, and in a conflict with the son of the ruling prince, he killed him. He immediately fled for his life, but, being hotly pursued, he rushed through a gate which happened to be open at the time, into a spacious garden, and hid himself in the retirement of its shady bowers. Here after a time the proprietor discovered him, to whom the unhappy youth made such a pathetic appeal for protection that the heart of the prince was moved with compassion toward him; and plucking an apple from a tree near by, he divided

it, and ate with the stranger, as a confirmation of a pledge he gave him for the protection he implored. The proprietor of the garden was himself the father of the youth who had been cruelly murdered by the stranger whom he had vowed to befriend and protect; and, on receiving tidings of the death of his son, and that the murder was one of a most aggravating character, he repaired to his garden, and thus addressed the murderer: "Christian! he whom you killed was my son; and you deserve the punishment of death, which you ought to receive. But I have *eaten with you*, as a pledge of friendship and protection, and cannot recall my vow. You are safe, agonizing as it is to my wounded heart to spare you the punishment you deserve, because I am bound by a pledge which all men hold sacred, that I will be a friend to you in your distress;" and he provided him with an escort, to send him in safety out of his dominions.

This circumstance, which has been published in substance as I have related it, may be true or false; but, whether true or false, it exhibits a sentiment which exists, and has always existed, almost universally among men respecting the

sacredness of professions, covenants, and vows made between parties, and ratified by the visible sign of eating and drinking with each other.

Among all the reproaches cast upon the primitive Christians by heathen writers, who seemed never so well pleased as when they could find an occasion to contrast their moral principles and practices with those which all men accounted virtues, none was so deadly and difficult to refute as the treachery of Judas, from the fact that he perpetrated his act of perfidy against his Master immediately after eating with him, and even had it in his heart to do it while they supped together. They said: "The apostles were infamous publicans and abandoned sailors." But this general calumny was easily refuted by a reference to their holy lives and godly deportment, in contrast with which the lives and conduct of their proud accusers were disparaged in the light of their own philosophy; for those good men, by their integrity in faith and holiness, commended themselves to every man's conscience, as examples of all that is true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report. The reproaches of their enemies, there-

fore, did not harm them, nor injure the cause of their Master. But the defection of Judas presented a more serious difficulty. So black and infamous a crime as that of eating with a friend with professions of love and fidelity toward him, and then betraying him, it was alleged, had never been committed by the worst of men; that it indicated a depth of depravity and degradation which showed a want of every principle of virtue, and that for its enormity it had no parallel. The point to be keep in view here is, not that Judas was denounced as the most depraved and wicked man in the world, because he had betrayed Christ, and thus caused him to be put to death. There had been and were others guilty of acts of treachery and cruelty of equal enormity in themselves considered. But the circumstance which indicated the unmitigated wickedness of his heart was, that he *ate and drank* with him, thus pledging his love and fidelity as a disciple, and then betrayed him. Thus it is that partaking of the sacrament is held, not only by Christians, but by those without, as a pledge, having all the solemn import of an oath, to be true and faithful in our love and obedience to Christ.

What increases, if possible, the solemnity of this transaction is, that the sacrament is a covenant rite. "Covenants," says Mr. Watson, "were anciently confirmed by eating and drinking together, and chiefly by feasting on a sacrifice. In this manner Abimelech, the Philistine, confirmed the covenant with Isaac, and Jacob with his father Laban. Gen. xxvi, 26–31; xxxi, 44–46, 54. Sometimes they divided the parts of the victim, and passed between them, by which act the parties signified their resolution of fulfilling all the terms of the engagement, on pain of being divided or cut asunder, as the sacrifice had been, if they should violate the covenant. Gen. xv, 9, 10, 17, 18; Jer. xxxiv, 18. When the law of Moses was established, the people feasted in their peace-offerings on a part of their sacrifice, as a token of their reconciliation with God. Deut. xii, 6, 7."

How significantly impressive was the institution of the Lord's Supper, as an ordinance recognizing in its very essence the great atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world, when viewed as a seal of the covenant into which God has been pleased to enter with his people. "Take, eat,"

says Christ, "this is my, body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me." After the same manner also he took the cup, saying: "This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." 1 Cor. xi, 24, 25. Can language affirm more explicitly, that the covenant is sealed by the blood of atonement, which he shed as a sacrifice for sin?

I cannot better conclude this part of my subject than in the language of that eminent and profound theologian, Rev. Richard Watson. Of the Lord's Supper, as a sacrament, he says: "The SACRAMENTAL character of the ordinance is the first point to be established, in order to a true conception of its nature and import. It is more than a commemorative rite; it is commemorative sacramentally; in other words, it is a commemorative sign and seal of the covenant of our redemption.

"The first proof of this may be deduced from our Lord's words used in the institution of the ordinance. 'This is my body, this is my blood,' are words which show a most intimate connexion between the elements and that which

was represented by them, the *sacrificial* offering of the body and blood of Christ as the price of our redemption; they were the signs of what was 'given for *us*,' surrendered to death in our room or stead, that we might have the benefit of liberation from eternal death. Again: 'This is the New Testament,' or covenant, 'in my blood.' The covenant itself was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is therefore called by St. Paul 'the blood of the everlasting covenant;' and the cup had so intimate a connection with that covenant, as to represent it and the means of its establishment, or of its acquiring validity, the shedding of the blood of our Saviour. It is clear, therefore, that the rite of the Lord's Supper is a *covenant* rite, and consequently a sacrament; a visible sign and seal on the part of Him who made the covenant, that it was established in, and ratified by, the sacrificial death of Christ.

"As it bears this covenant or sacramental character on the part of the institutor, so also on the part of the recipients. They were all to eat the bread in 'remembrance' of Christ; in remembrance, certainly, of his death in particular; yet not as a mere historical event, but of his

death as *sacrificial;* and therefore the commemoration was to be on their part an acknowledgment of the doctrine of the vicarious and propitiatory nature of the death of Christ, and an act of faith in it. Then as to the cup, they were commanded to drink it, for a reason particularly given: 'For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins;' the recognition, therefore, implied in the act, was not merely that Christ's blood was shed, but that it was shed as the blood of 'the new covenant,' and for 'the remission of sins,' a recognition which could only take place in consequence of 'faith in his blood,' as the blood of atonement.

"Again, says St. Paul, as taught by the particular revelation he received as to the Lord's Supper: 'For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do *show*,' or publish, 'the Lord's death until he come,' which publication of his death was not the mere declaration of the fact of 'the Lord's death,' but of his death, according to the apostolic doctrine, as a true propitiation for sin, the benefits of which are to be received by faith. Thus, then, we see in the

Lord's Supper the visible token and pledge of a covenant of mercy in the blood of Christ, exhibited by God, its author; and on the part of man a visible acknowledgment of this covenant, so ratified by the sacrifice of Christ, and an act of entire faith in its truth and efficacy in order to the remission of sins, and the conferring of all other spiritual benefits. As a SIGN, it exhibits, 1. The infinite love of God to the world, who gave 'his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life.' 2. The love of Christ, who 'died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' 3. The extreme nature of his sufferings, which were unto *death*. 4. The vicarious and sacrificial character of that death, as a sin-offering and a propitiation, in virtue of which only a covenant of grace was entered into with man by the offended God. 5. The benefits derived from it through believing; 'remission of sins,' and the nourishment of the soul in spiritual life and vigor, by virtue of a vital 'communion' with Christ, so that it is advanced and perfected in holiness, 'until he come,' to confer upon his disciples the covenanted blessing of eternal life.

"As a SEAL, it is a constant assurance on the part of God of the continuance of this covenant redemption in full, undiminished force from age to age; it is a pledge to every penitent who believes in Christ, and receives this sacrament in profession of his entire reliance upon the merits of Christ's passion for forgiveness, that he is an object of merciful regard and acceptance; there is in it also, as to every one who thus believes and is accepted, a constant exhibition of Christ as the spiritual food of the soul, to be received by faith that he may grow thereby; and a renewed assurance of the bestowment of the full grace of the new covenant, in the accomplishment of all its promises, both in this life and that which is to come. In every celebration the *sign* of all these gracious acts, provisions, and hopes is exhibited, and God condescends thus to repeat his *pledges* of faithfulness and love to the Church of Christ, purchased by his blood. The members of that Church, on the other hand, renew their acceptance of, and reliance upon, the new covenant; they publish their faith in Christ; they glory in his *cross*, his sacrificial, though shameful death, as the wisdom of God and the power of

God; they feast upon the true passover victim by their faith, and they do this with *joy and thanksgiving*, on account of a greater deliverance than that of the Israelites from Egypt, of which they are the subjects. It is the predominance of thanksgiving in celebrating this hallowed rite, which at so early a period of the Church attached to the Lord's Supper the title of '*the Eucharist.*' "—*Watson's Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 423–425.

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS.

I. With an earnest desire that this little work may be useful in stirring up Christians to do all their duty in the fear of God, I would call their attention to a serious consideration of the impressive truth, which must appear plain from the foregoing remarks on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, that a religious observance of that ordinance by those who profess to be disciples of Christ, is enforced by all the solemn sanctions which involve our spiritual and eternal welfare. Can one who has experienced the blessings of pardon and peace through faith in Christ as his Redeemer and Saviour, hope to "continue in the grace of God," and gain heaven at last, while from indifference or otherwise he habitually neglects to renew his covenant with Christ, by an observance of the divinely instituted ordinance in which he has promised to meet his people, and renew to them his pledges of "grace, mercy, and

peace?" Brethren beloved! think of these things. It is no slight matter that we, the unworthy recipients of his grace, neglect his calls to a participation with him in the festive rite which he has instituted for our edification, and a renewal of our covenant vows to be his forever.

But to be more particular. A devout and habitual observance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is at the very head of the catalogue of duties which are enjoined in the Scriptures upon Christians. It is a covenant duty. It is a *sacrament.* True, baptism is also a sacrament. But the Lord's Supper, as a covenant institution, is distinguished as paramount by this, that it is to be repeated and habitually observed by the disciples of Christ throughout their lives, as a renewal at each time of their profession of faith in him, and a fresh consecration of themselves to his service. All other duties, and ceremonies, and religious observances practiced by Christians, whether founded on a Scripture warrant or conventionally instituted without a Scripture warrant, lacking the seal of the covenant, or the sign, or both, fail to command our veneration and respect as *sacraments;* and therefore, whatever importance

we may attach to any or all of them as means of edification and spiritual improvement, the Lord's Supper should never be permitted to occupy a place in our minds and hearts as less important and binding than the chief of them.

We may embrace in this remark the decalogue, the ten commandments, written by the finger of God upon tables of stone. These, indeed, are all obligatory. No one of them can be broken without incurring the displeasure of God. No one can neglect any duty they enjoin without periling his soul. He who is guilty or delinquent in these respects must be pardoned or perish. This truth is felt by all who are enlightened in regard to their religious duties. What profane swearer, or Sabbath-breaker, or licentious person, though he may profess religion, and be in the Church, can rationally presume that he is in the favor of God, and prepared for heaven? All right-minded Christians know that he is not. They feel in their souls that if they were guilty of habitually neglecting the commandments, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," etc., they would incur the Divine displeasure, and extinguish their hope of heaven. Is there not reason to fear that

there are those in our Churches who, while they are duly and deeply impressed with the awful danger and fearful consequence of neglecting the duties enjoined by the commandments inscribed on tables of stone, and proclaimed amid the darkness and terrors of Sinai, are yet quite unconcerned about their habitual neglect of the solemn injunction of the Saviour, uttered at the very foot of the cross, and recorded in the testament sealed with his blood, "This do in remembrance of me." The tender solicitude I feel that such may rightly understand and sensibly realize the force of the obligation upon them to fulfill the command of the Saviour in regard to this sacrament, induces me to dwell upon this point. I would press upon them a serious consideration of the fact which I have already stated, that a faithful observance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is paramount among all the duties enjoined in the Scriptures.

All duties are indeed binding. Those enjoined by the commandments are especially so. But to which of them has God appended the seal of his covenant, in connection with an observance of which he has promised to meet us, and pledged his acceptance of us as his people, and his favor

toward us in the impartation of life and salvation through faith in his name? Not one. The young man in the Gospel who earnestly inquired of the Saviour what he must do that he might inherit eternal life, was referred to the commandments, with the intimation that an observance of them was essential to that end. He said: "Master, all these have I observed from my youth up. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest." Mark x, 17–21. Sad thought! that an observance of all the commandments, in the letter only of course, should fail, for lack of one thing, to secure an inheritance in the kingdom of God. But so it was, and so it is. Christians under the broad sunshine of the Gospel dispensation can no more fit themselves to inherit eternal life by keeping the commandments than the young man who made his appeal to the Saviour could. The reason is plain, that though the duties which the commandments enjoin are all binding upon Christians, and cannot be violated or neglected without incurring guilt, none of them are honored with the dignity of a sacramental institute, in which the righteous and holy God condescends to

meet the humble performer of the prescribed duty, and enter into covenant with him to pardon, bless, and save him.

Herein, then, is the superior excellency of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the paramount importance to Christians to do whatsoever the Lord has commanded them respecting it, habitually, sincerely, devoutly. I need not repeat here that we are not to trust in the mere act of formally receiving the sacrament as possessing any merit or virtue to render us acceptable to God, more than any other religious duty performed in the same cold and formal manner. But we are to observe it as a means of leading our minds to the great atonement, and aiding us in the exercise of faith in the efficacy of that atonement to save us, and as the instituted ordinance in which Christ our Lord has promised to meet us, to impart to us the spiritual life we need to sustain our souls, and to renew his covenant of grace and salvation with us. Surely if all were duly impressed with a sense of the importance of this duty, as it appears in this view of it, the indifference and neglect of many professing Christians respecting it would appear unaccountable

to themselves. Most earnestly would I urge all such to turn their thoughts seriously and prayerfully to this matter, and recover themselves while they may from the snare of the enemy.

There is another practical error growing out of the low and imperfect views which too generally prevail respecting the nature and importance of the sacrament, to which, in this connection, I desire to call attention. It is the preference often, if not generally, given to merely conventional and arbitrary ceremonies and observances, as means of spiritual improvement and edification, above the divinely instituted ordinance which God has appointed as a seal of his covenant with his people. Different means may be used by different persons and different associations to promote their spiritual edification, strengthen them in their religious course, and fan the flame of devotion in their hearts; and these may be practised with more or less success, as they are more or less adapted to the object sought to be attained, and more or less accompanied with a zeal and pious fervor which are always the concomitants of grace in the heart. Hence, the primitive Christians had their love-feasts, though

not explicitly instituted by the Saviour, which, if we may believe the testimony of Tertullian, were conducted with much propriety, and productive, as a social means of grace, of edification and spiritual comfort. The Moravians and the Methodists have their love-feasts somewhat similar to those of the primitive Christians, but still more simple, and sufficiently distinguished from them to show that each was adapted to its own specific purpose by those with whom it originated. The class-meetings and band-meetings among the Methodists, and covenant-meetings, conference-meetings, social prayer-meetings, concerts for prayer, etc., adapted as means of grace and spiritual edification by different denominations, are of the character intended in these remarks. All these means have been owned of God in the edification of those who have faithfully attended them for purposes of spiritual improvement. Still more, in later times voluntary religious meetings have been established by laymen for merchants, and the laboring classes, and young men, etc., and rules adopted for conducting them, so that in some cases they have become, in a sort, permanent religious institutions. Against all or any

of these extraordinary means, God forbid that I should utter a sentence or cherish an adverse feeling. They have contributed much toward keeping alive the spirit of piety in Christians, and influencing others to become such. But is there no danger that we may, by overrating some one of these means, from our denominational partiality to them, or because they have been rendered a particular benefit and blessing to us, be led to undervalue and neglect that catholic ordinance which was instituted for all, and the observance of which is enjoined upon all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in every age and every branch of his Church? Is there not reason to believe that this has been, and now is, the case with many who are not aware of the consequences of it, in the loss of that spiritual nourishment to their souls which a better view and more faithful observance of the sacrament would ensure?

I have, in many instances, observed Church members, who, when a love-feast was to be held, could not be restrained on any account from attending it, but would press through every difficulty to enjoy the privilege, and at the same time manifest little or no interest to be present

at the Lord's table. Some I have known who were always present at the love-feasts, and watch-nights, and on other similar occasions, indicating the esteem in which they held these institutions as means to promote their religious enjoyment, by the unrestrained fervor and animation which they exhibited in their religious exercises, who would even retire from the church when the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was about to be administered, with the utmost apparent indifference. This manifest preference for the institutions and provisional arrangements adopted by the various denominations of Christians for their spiritual improvement, is no doubt witnessed more or less in all Churches. Indeed it is not uncommon to hear the members of the different denominations speak with earnestness and animation of the exercises on such occasions in a way to indicate that they are esteemed by them as the principal, if not the only means of quickening and reviving believers, and drawing sinners to Christ, when they are seldom heard to mention a sacramental occasion as a season that interests their feelings at all. Are not these things so? Nay, more, is not this spirit of indifference to this sacramental

institution of Christ, and preference for novel and voluntary modes of worship, increasing in the Churches? The example has become contagious, and its effects are seen in the increasing number of persons who profess to be converted, but neglect to connect themselves with any Church. Forty years ago such a case was scarcely known. Each new convert inquired, "Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do?" And no one thought of omitting, beyond the first opportunity, the solemn covenant rite of the Lord's Supper, in communion with some branch of the Church, in obedience to the command, "This do in remembrance of me." But it is not so now. I have at this moment in my mind many endeared friends, whom I have seen at the altar of prayer, and, renewed by grace, heard utter praise and thanksgiving to God for his pardoning mercy. Like other redeemed spirits, they were zealous for God, earnestly persuading all to whom they could have access to seek the Lord. But for some cause they remain without the pale of the Church, and totally neglect its ordinances. Since the commencement of the great revival which has spread over the country, instances of

this kind have been multiplied, and the truth cannot be disguised that many, very many, of the most hopeful and promising subjects of it have never yet connected themselves with any Church, or taken upon themselves the sacramental vows of a covenant-keeping God. Is it not evident that this state of things has been produced principally, if not wholly, by the laxness and apparent indifference of Church members in regard to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? There can be no doubt of it. And the fact that it is so furnishes a cogent reason for renewed effort on the part of the Churches to resuscitate in their membership the spirit, in regard to the holy sacrament, which actuated the primitive Christians.

In order to this, let the nature and importance of the Lord's Supper, as a *sacrament*, be duly considered. Let all who love our Lord Jesus Christ bear it constantly in mind that this sacrament was instituted in *form* by the Saviour, as a *covenant* rite, in which he has condescended to become a party, and pledges on his part to fulfill all his "great and precious promises" to his people, on condition that they fulfill what is required on their part. He has not only made, in the

form of the ordinance, a visible exhibition of the substance of the rite and its spiritual import, or the things signified by it, but he has superadded words of institution, and a promise by which the two are connected together. Hence it is that we have an assurance, in this act of drawing nigh to God, that our offering, if rendered in faith, is acceptable, and our covenant relations to our God renewed and confirmed. Would that I could present the practical importance of this view of the subject with sufficient clearness and force to cause it to be *felt* by all the members of the Churches of our common Lord. Sure I am, if they saw it as it appears to me, the table of the Lord would be the last means of grace they would neglect.

II. One of the benefits to be derived from a right observance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is, that of all our religious duties it is most eminently adapted to confirm and strengthen our faith. By this I mean "the faith which works by love and purifies the heart." "Faith cometh by hearing." Rom. x, 17. It comes, also, by seeing, and tasting, and meditation. Particularly in this ordinance is it so.

If I were inquired of, as I sometimes am, what are the *essential* doctrines of the Gospel? understanding it to mean the doctrines essential to be impressed with more or less clearness upon our minds in order to salvation, I would deem it a sufficient reply to say, those which are indicated in the institution of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. They are, as every experienced Christian knows, the same which powerfully wrought in his mind and heart when he was brought to accept of Christ as his Redeemer and Saviour, and received the witness of his adoption as a child of God.

When the Philippian jailer inquired, "What must I do to be saved?" the apostles replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts xvi, 30, 31. He believed and was saved. His faith embraced all that was *essential* to salvation. What more entered into it need not perplex or trouble any one. It is enough to know that all that was *essential* did enter into it, and work to the deliverance of his soul from the thraldom of sin. But what was this faith that wrought so powerfully in him? Surely not a mere belief in the truth of the history of Christ's advent, or his working miracles,

or his death and resurrection. It was a faith in the efficacy of his passion and death as a propitiatory offering for sin; in the soul-inspiring truth that his body was broken for sinful man, and his blood shed for the remission of sins; that he, by reason of his bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, became the author of eternal salvation to them that believe; and with such a faith he was enabled to receive and trust in him as an all-sufficient Saviour, and realize, in the sense of pardon and peace which was communicated to his soul through the Spirit, the truth of the apostles' answer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Every soul that has been thus awakened and converted can attest that such is the nature of a true saving faith. And it is in this that the living and growing Christian stands fast in the Lord. While he has a lively view of the Saviour, as he saw him when he first believed, he enjoys peace in his soul, and is strong in the Lord. Does not this, then, embrace what is *essential* to salvation? Truths there are scattered all through the Scriptures, which tend to edification and comfort, as they are presented to the minds of those who,

by continuing in the faith, "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." But all the essentials, which form the groundwork of a Christian experience, are those above named. How important is it, then, that they should have a living, abiding place in our hearts. To be shaken in our minds with respect to any of these is like the removal of the foundation of a building. It endangers the whole structure. But these remaining in all their vital strength, the temple of our experience is built up and beautified by every addition that is made to it.

Now let Christians consider how wonderfully the Lord has adapted the institution of the sacrament to keep alive in their minds and hearts these essential elements of saving faith. Take every word, every act, which together constitute the ordinance as prescribed by the Master. All present to the mind some indication of the essential object of saving faith, "Christ and him crucified," whose blood was shed for the remission of sins. Having dwelt upon this point at some length in another place, it is not necessary to repeat my remarks here. It is its practical importance which I desire to enforce. All know

how liable newly converted persons are to be lured from the simplicity of the Gospel by plausible errors, thrust upon them by the art and cunning of false teachers. With this departure from first principles the affections lose their hold upon the Saviour. Their feelings become languid, and their love grows cold. And then comes the danger of being turned to fables. The means of religious instruction to which they are drawn may be, and often are, a mixture of truth and error, in which there is such a preponderance of the latter as to wholly obscure and neutralize the former. Thus are their souls robbed of the bread of life, and as Paul said in regard to some at Corinth, who seem to have fallen in precisely this way, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." 1 Cor. xi, 30.

The time has arrived in the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom when pure religion has little to fear from open infidelity, with its blank denial of the Bible, and scoffing ridicule of all that is lovely and of good report. But it has the more to fear from the insidious workings of the same enmity to the doctrines of the cross

which characterized the infidelity of former times, in another form.

The increasing harmony among "orthodox" Christians is one of the marked events of the age. It is the rainbow of promise to the wise and good, who have mingled their fervent prayers around the throne for the coming of Christ's kingdom on earth. But few, perhaps, who have hailed with glad hearts these indications of a purer and holier catholicity among the members of Christ's body on earth, have examined with care the vital principles which bind them to him and to one another, and distinguish them from all others. These principles constitute the "orthodox" faith; and their efficacy in experience is so potent, that the most simple-hearted believers realize their power to attract them to their common Head, and bind them in sympathy and affection to the common brotherhood of the "household of God," as the needle is attracted to the pole. This inward power is the bond of union among the saints of God. And what I wish to remark here is, that by the strictest investigation it will be found that the faith in which all these agree, and for which,

with heart and soul, they are wont earnestly to contend, is that embraced in the ritual of the sacrament. On other points of difference with their fellow Christians, and with others, they can be liberal, and yield rather than contend. But here they are firm. And this, perhaps, is the reason why the "orthodox," as such, are denounced as bigoted and illiberal by those who discard this anchorage of their hope. But the converse of all this is seen in those who make common cause against "orthodox" Christianity, as professed by the evangelical Churches. The fact is suggestive and admonitory, that the parties and institutions which have sprung into existence in the name of religion, and which have seduced from the bosoms of the evangelical Churches many who had "run well for a season," have all been distinguished for their united opposition to the doctrines which are interwoven in the institution of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

If we begin with the Arians of former times, and take in the range of our observation the Socinians, Swedenborgians, Unitarians, Hicksite Quakers, Universalists, Shakers, Adventists, Spiritualists, Mormons, etc., all of whom have their

organized societies, religious creeds or principles, and places and forms of worship, and make proselytes from the evangelical Churches, some of them from the Churches mainly, we shall find, without exception, that all attack, as fundamental errors to be discarded by those who adhere to them, the doctrines which are so impressively presented in the ordinance of the sacrament. We pity those who have been lured from the simplicity of the Gospel by these delusions. We have friends among them. Once we took sweet counsel with them. They walked with us to the house of God. Our hearts burned within us while we talked with them of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory he has promised to his faithful followers. They had power with God in prayer, and were useful in all their labors to strengthen the weak and confirm the wavering. But a change has come over them. Some are quite gone astray, and now indulge in bitter revilings against their former brethren, and the institutions they professed most ardently to love. Others still linger around the altars where once their devotions glowed with a holy ardor; but there is now no life, no spirit in them. By

degrees they are departing in sympathy and affection from the institutions they once loved, and the brotherhood in which they were stimulated to increased exertions for higher attainments in piety and holiness; and our concern for their safety is heightened by the fact that their zeal and devotion to promote the errors by which they have been ensnared, and the institutions which sustain them, is increased just in proportion to the abatement of their affection and esteem for the institutions and the people they once loved.

I allude to these facts for the purpose of impressing Christians who still "stand fast in the Lord," with the importance of a steady and faithful observance of this ordinance, in a way to keep alive in their minds and hearts the doctrines set forth in it as fundamental and efficacious in sustaining the life of the soul, and strengthening their faith in those doctrines. Is it not reasonable to conclude, that if the multitudes who have "departed from the faith," through the instrumentality of false teachers and delusive errors, had steadfastly adhered to the Saviour's command, "This do in remem-

brance of me," and at every opportunity brought their minds and souls into communion with the doctrines of the cross as they are exhibited in the ordinance of the sacrament, they would have been shielded against the attacks of error so ruinous to their piety, by any of the weapons it has ever employed?" "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. x, 12. We know not the danger of losing sight for a moment of the life-sustaining doctrines of "Christ crucified." To guard this point, let all come to the means which Christ has ordained to help and strengthen us. It is the armor God has provided, and it will protect the faithful.

III. There is another large and increasing class of persons whom I wish earnestly and affectionately to address on this subject. I mean those who have been brought to the knowledge of God through faith in Christ, and made profession of that great and glorious change before the world, but have *never connected themselves with any Church*, and seem content to live in total neglect of the ordinances instituted by Christ as both a badge of the good man's profession, and a sign and seal of God's covenant

with his people. How can a Christian do this? How can one who has "tasted that the Lord is gracious," retain his spiritual life, and "grow up in Christ," in spiritual knowledge and holiness, who habitually and of choice neglects his explicit command in respect to this sacrament: "This do in remembrance of me?"

We would not rashly condemn all such persons as willful neglecters of duty. But we earnestly entreat them to review the reasons which have influenced them to refrain from connecting themselves with the sacramental hosts of the Lord's anointed, and serving him in the way he has appointed. It is plainly their duty to connect themselves with some evangelical branch of the Church of Christ, that they may let their light shine before the world, and enjoy the covenant blessings which God has promised to his people.

There are causes in operation at the present time which tend to increase this evil, and render it the more important that the attention of those concerned should be called to it. Freedom of thought and choice in matters of religion is claimed by all, and accorded to all. With this

right to choose as to the mode in which they will worship God, some seem to feel that it is a matter of indifference whether they worship him in any of the modes practiced by the different branches of his Church or not. Let all such bear in mind that though they have a right to choose for themselves in matters which are not *essential*, whether they are such as others agree to or not, they are *not* at liberty to choose whether they will or will not observe the ordinances which are explicitly enjoined by the great Head of the Church, and binding upon all his followers, without forfeiting their title to the covenant mercy of God, and their adoption as his children. This truth their own experience will sooner or later demonstrate. I would urge them by the love of Christ, and their desire to save their souls, to avoid this snare of the enemy. Some there are who appear to think that all Church organizations are a kind of bondage, which restrict them in the exercise of their freedom; and because it is most congenial to their sentiments and feelings to be bound by none of them, they remain without the fold. Others see, or think they see, many things in the

Churches and Church members which they do not approve, and therefore choose to stand alone. Others, still, see difficulties in the Churches which give pain and grief to the faithful, and require labor and care on their part to settle them, and they refrain from connecting themselves with any of them on that account. Unlike Moses, they choose rather *not* to suffer affliction with the people of God. And in addition to all these, especially since the commencement of the great revival through the country, many have been awakened and converted through the instrumentality of laymen, and in connection with associations and meetings under the control and conduct of laymen, which means the Spirit has honored in its operations upon the hearts of the people, as well in the quickening and edifying of the recently converted, as in the awakening and conversion of others. Many of these naturally feel that as they *can* enjoy a sense of the favor of God apart from the Church, there is no necessity of Church privileges to retain this blessed experience, and thus they continue to neglect seeking a sanctuary with the people of God in his house, not considering that they need

the established means of grace ordained by God to nourish and strengthen them in their new and spiritual life. To all such persons, everywhere, I most affectionately appeal in the name of Him who has "called them out of darkness into his marvelous light," that they will "consider the Apostle and High Priest of their profession," and not slight the means he has instituted for their edification and comfort. Whatever else he has left to their choice, in the exercise of their religious freedom, he has commanded them to "remember" him in the ordinance of the Eucharist. In this ordinance he has provided that their hearts and minds shall be brought into a connection with those fundamental truths which exhibit him as their Redeemer and Saviour, in a way to present him as they saw him when they were made partakers of his grace, and adopted into the family of God. In it, also, he has covenanted to meet with his people, to strengthen their faith and comfort their hearts. There are no advantages to be gained, spiritually, by remaining out of the Church, and no considerations among all that men plead as reasons for neglecting to take upon them the covenant obligations of Church

members, that can compensate for the loss of the spiritual blessings vouchsafed to those who, like Zachariah and Elizabeth, "walk blameless in all the ordinances of the Lord;" much less to acquit them of the guilt of disobedience in neglecting what the blessed Master has commanded them to do. Brethren beloved! think of these things. "Ye are my friends," said Jesus, "if ye do whatsoever I command you." John xv, 14.

Some abstain from joining the visible Church from what appear to them motives of piety. They see much imperfection in Church members, and much sinfulness in the Church, therefore they will stand apart. But do they not forget that Christ has uttered the express command, "Do this in remembrance of me?" And do they consider disobedience to Christ a mark of superior piety? On the contrary, do they not assume a position of permanent lifelong disobedience to Christ, and therefore of permanent impiety? There may be imperfection in Church members, but is it not something worse than imperfection deliberately to determine to stay out of the Church? that is, to avoid the fold of Christ, and to repudiate all his ordinances. If the Church be too wicked

for you to enter it, is not the world too wicked for you to stay in it? Would it not be wiser, humbler, more childlike, more Christlike, to believe that, so far from his Church being unworthy of you, you may hardly be worthy of it? While you condemn the imperfections of others, are you not manifesting a deeper imperfection? Would it not be better for you to enter the Church, and, if possible, in your own example, show what you think a church member ought to be? And are you not mistaken in supposing that you will be more pious out of than in the Church? I think that such is never the case. During an experience of forty-eight years in the ministry I have never known an instance of a person of superior piety who persisted in maintaining a position out of the Church of Christ. On the contrary, those who have neglected the obligation of entering into visible covenant with God's people have uniformly declined in piety and often lost their religion.

If all Christians did like you Christ's sacraments would die. The communion of his body and blood would perish. A crucified Christ ceases from the world. Thereby the Church which he has instituted, and which he has bought with his

own blood and endowed with sacraments, becomes extinct. The body of Christ is slain, and by you is crucified afresh. Is not that Church, with all its imperfections, the hope of the world? Does it not preserve for you the Scriptures, the Sabbath, the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, the Baptism, and the Communion? With all these is she not the means of your conversion? is she not your spiritual mother? Then do not, by your own course, leave her to perish. Perform your part in transmitting her to future generations and in spreading her power over all the earth.

IV. The very sacredness of this ordinance deters many sincere and conscientious persons from receiving it. They are impressed with a sense of their unworthiness; and when they remember that it is said, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself," (1 Cor. xi, 29,) they apply it to their own case, and judge it better to refrain from communing at the Lord's table than to peril their souls by the possibility of eating and drinking "unworthily." The case of this class of Christians claims our sympathy and attention. We cannot think of their condition without feeling a desire

that they may be rescued from the snare in which their own pious scruples have entangled them.

Let us then say to all such that the admonition and rebuke of the apostle to certain members of the Church at Corinth, were not designed for persons who, like themselves, have humiliating views of their religious attainments; but for those of a directly contrary character, the self-confident and profane, who, at the sacramental feasts, "feed themselves without fear," to gratify their carnal appetites. This is plainly shown from the scope of the apostle's remarks on this subject, in his letter to the Corinthians. Take that section of his epistle which contains the alarming passage alluded to, and examine it, comparing word with word, and sentence with sentence, from beginning to end, and then judge what class of the communicants he intended to admonish and rebuke by those impressive words: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." He begins with the grave charge against them, that when they came together in the church to celebrate the passion and death of Christ, there were divisions among them; and they came in parties, each section or

party bringing provisions with them for a feast, which they prepared and ate, one before another; as at an ordinary feast, they ate and drank without restraint, and some to excess. And thus, while they professed to celebrate the Lord's Supper, they substituted a carnal feast, in nowise calculated to produce in their minds those pious thoughts and religious sentiments which the sacrament was designed to inspire. This perversion of the ordinance the apostle condemns; and to show how inconsistent it was with every just idea of the nature and design of the sacrament, he presents that institution, as he had received it by revelation, in all its simplicity and beauty, as the ordinance of God, which could not be profaned and disparaged, as it was by the conduct of these Corinthians, without incurring his displeasure and the penalty of his righteous judgment. By eating and drinking unworthily, the apostle evidently meant eating and drinking as these Corinthians did, without restraint, irreverently, profanely. Such the most humble and self-abased of our diffident, non-communing professors will surely admit it to be, without any apprehension that they are liable to fall under the condemnation it incurs.

In this view of the subject we perceive the connection between the crime—eating and drinking "unworthily," and the penalty denounced—"eateth and drinketh *damnation* to himself." Let it be observed that the word "damnation" here is not to be taken in its ordinary sense to mean eternal damnation, but, as it should be rendered, "judgment," which is generally used in the Scriptures to signify the punishment which God inflicts upon men for particular sins in this life, as a visible token of his displeasure on account of those sins. Thus intemperance is punished by the just judgment of God in the wreck and ruin of the inebriate. It is God's penalty, and so connected with the crime in the administration of his righteous judgments, that we hesitate not to say of the confirmed drunkard, "he is drinking his own ruin." So of the voluptuous Corinthians who had turned the feast of the Lord into an occasion of dissipation, instead of eating and drinking to their spiritual edification, which a right observance of the sacrament was calculated to produce, and, with the promised blessing of God upon it, was sure to produce; they ate and drank to their own condemnation and misery.

as their carnal indulgences, with God's threatened judgment against them, were, by a law of Divine Providence, sure to be followed by such results. Already there were examples among them of the truth of this fearful denunciation. "For this cause," says the apostle, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep," that is, are dead.

Believing that the words of the apostle, "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily," etc., were intended to be applied to the abuse of the ordinance by the Corinthians, as above stated, and to those in all ages who like them profane it by such irreverent practices, and not to sincere professors who have no desire but to use it for the glory of God and the benefit of their own souls, I submit these thoughts for their consideration and comfort.

But if any yet believe that the threatened judgment for eating and drinking unworthily has a broader application, and may embrace the unworthiness which they attach to themselves, I ask their attention to a few additional remarks. In the first place, let them bear in mind what has already been stated, that the word "*dam-*

nation," in this connection, does not mean *eternal damnation*, but *judgment* merely, by which is meant a visitation of God, which may consist in inflicting suffering of some kind, or withholding the blessings which a right use of his ordinances authorizes to expect, as the penalty of failing or coming short of his requirements in our approaches to him in this ordinance. A right understanding of this will remove all those apprehensions which awe and restrain many serious persons when they think of the subject of communing at the sacrament, lest they should err in their judgment of their fitness for it, and seal their damnation by presumptuously partaking of it. There is no danger of this. It cannot be. One may commune unworthily, as some of the Corinthians did; and if he continue to do so, and do not repent, he will be finally cast off and perish. But no one act, not even such as the Corinthians were guilty of, is the *unpardonable sin*. Let none then be restrained from approaching the table of the Lord, and communing with his people, from an ungrounded apprehension that to do so, even "unworthily," is the greatest of all sins—the sin for which there is no forgiveness.

Another thing to be noticed in this connection is, that the meaning of the term "*unworthily*," as used here by the apostle, has been, perhaps very generally, misapprehended by the class of persons for whose benefit these remarks are intended. To *be worthy* to do an act is a thing quite different from doing it *worthily*. The former implies merit or worth in ourselves, to entitle us to claim the right to do it, without acknowledging our obligation to any one for the privilege; the latter supposes that we perform what we do in a manner suited to the object. Moses was not *worthy* of the honor of making the tabernacle; but he acted *worthily* in making it after the pattern which God gave him, because he acted in obedience to the command of God, and performed as a faithful and willing servant the work which was assigned him. Let this distinction be constantly kept in mind, and there will be no danger of our being deterred from what our blessed Lord has commanded us to do, in the manner and spirit which he requires, because of any sense of unworthiness in ourselves. To do an act worthily by the requirement and direction of another, is to do it cheerfully accord-

ing to his will and pleasure. If we fail to do his will, and subvert his designs to gratify ourselves, we do it *unworthily*. The Corinthians ate and drank unworthily, because they conducted in a way unworthy of their profession as the servants of Christ, and of the service he claimed of them—to acknowledge him in the holy ordinance he had instituted and commanded them to observe.

But the apostle says: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. xi, 28. Why, it may be inquired, if the unworthiness of which he speaks respects the act of communicating, and not the state of the communicant, are we required to examine ourselves? The answer is, that to avoid eating and drinking unworthily, we must be influenced by right views of the nature and design of the ordinance, and pure motives in partaking of it; and this requires previous self-examination. But this examination regards our faith in the atonement as necessary to salvation, and the sincerity of our motives in coming to this ordinance as the instituted means which God has appointed for our spiritual edification, and not the degree of personal holiness we may possess, as a qualifi-

cation for acceptably communing at the Lord's table. Do we believe in our hearts that Christ died for us? that he is the propitiatory offering which alone God will accept on our behalf? that our only hope of pardon and salvation is in the atonement he has made for us? that he is our Advocate with the Father, and our High Priest, who ever liveth to make intercession for us? and that he has ordained and instituted this holy sacrament as a means of reviving and keeping alive in our minds these sacred truths, and has promised to meet with his people in this ordinance to strengthen their faith and comfort them with his grace? All this we must steadfastly believe in order to be prepared acceptably and profitably to commune at the Lord's table.

Our motives, too, must be right. We must feel our need of the grace promised to the faithful partaker of the holy sacrament, and approach the table of the Lord with a sincere desire to receive that grace. Our sole object and aim must be to glorify God, and receive spiritual benefit to our souls. These views and feelings, influencing our minds and hearts, constitute the fitness which, in the nature of the case, is required as a prepa-

ration to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And to be so prepared, it is important that our approach to that sacred ordinance should be preceded by a close and faithful self-examination as to our faith and motives, which must be right in order to our profiting by it.

The fatal error of the Corinthians was that they did not discern the Lord's body. The design of the ordinance, to exhibit "Christ crucified" as the only ground of the sinner's hope, did not once enter into their thoughts. For this reason they were disqualified to profit by it. They could not profit by it. They had neither the faith nor the motives necessary to profit by it. And whoever, like them, shall approach it without a sense of their need of salvation, and faith in the sacrificial offering of Christ upon the cross as the only ground of their hope, will, by not discerning the Lord's body, fail to receive the grace and comfort of which it is a means to those who partake of it by faith with thanksgiving.

But this error, so fatal to the Corinthians, need not be a stumbling-block to any sincere person who desires to please God in eating "this bread" and drinking "this cup," however unworthy in

his own estimation he may be. Let him examine himself, not to judge of his attainments in piety and holiness as a qualification for receiving the holy sacrament, but to bring all his thoughts and feelings to the one point of preparing to seek Christ in his ordinance, by such an exercise of faith in his passion and death as shall assure him that his offering is accepted and he approved of God.

"Come," brethren, you who have been lingering here, and still stand trembling at the porch of the sanctuary without daring to approach the altar; "Come, let us reason together." Once you lingered with a sense of your unworthiness, and feelings of awe and trembling, when you were pressed to come to *Christ himself*, who appeared, even to you, more sacred and holy than the ordinance to which he now invites you. Had you then, as now, refused to come till you felt you were worthy to claim fellowship with him, you would never have come, never have experienced the grace which he has promised to all true penitents who do come to him, and "believe to the saving of their souls." Heb. x, 39. But feeling your need of salvation, and that there is

"no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved," (Acts iv, 12,) you did come to *him*. You came with fear and trembling, but also with faith and hope. Your very sense of unworthiness was your fitness. So you felt it to be. You were "heavy laden" with a sense of guilt and pollution, and when you heard him say, "Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," (Matt. xi, 28,) you came, believed, and were saved. O what a mercy that such unworthy, guilty, polluted beings should be permitted to come to the holy and blessed Jesus, and be saved! He came into the world to save sinners.

Now what think you? Is his ordinance more holy than himself? Are you more unworthy to come to it than you were to come to *him?* Ponder these things in your hearts. He invited you to come to him, not because you were worthy, but because you needed salvation, and he alone could save you. He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Matt. ix, 13. He invites you to the feast of the sacrament, not because you are entitled to it by any worthiness in yourselves, but because he has in-

stituted it as a means to nourish and strengthen your souls in faith and love. And your fitness to come is your sense of the want of such grace as he has promised to those who receive it with faith in his promise, that he will meet with them and bless them. Banish your fears then, and with humility and faith come and own your Lord and Master at his table. Come the very next opportunity that offers, and the next, and the next, and continue to come at every opportunity. Let no considerations of business, or pleasure, or anything else prevent you, and God will bless you in it.

V. Let all who are accustomed to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and thus publicly profess their faith in Christ and their connection with his Church, duly consider the obligation such a public profession imposes upon them to live before the world "in all godliness and honesty." 1 Tim. ii, 2. This requires strict self-examination, not only as to our faith and motives, but particularly our tempers and conduct, both before and after communing. There are two reasons why professors should be circumspect and watchful in regard to their outward deportment.

One is, that an unholy life disqualifies us for the reception and enjoyment of grace in our hearts, however earnestly we may seek it by a steady and persevering attendance upon all the ordinances of God's house. He, therefore, who would be spiritually benefited by coming to the Lord's table, must approach it with a conscience unburdened by the guilt and stains of outward sins. How important is it then that we walk uprightly in all things, and keep our conscience clear in the sight of God. Another reason is, that the unholy lives of professors are cause of reproach and scandal, which infidels and scoffers employ to justify their opposition to the cause of Christ, and strengthen the bands of wickedness in the earth. To confess Christ at his table, and at the same time indulge in such practices as even the world calls sinful, is to wound him in the house of his friends. We are required by him to "walk even as he walked." 1 John ii, 6. Sinners know what lives Christians ought to live; and they are ever ready to seize upon any act or evidence of a wrong spirit or motive, inconsistent with the purity of the religion they profess, to reproach them and injure the cause of Christ.

Members of the Church who do not maintain a holy walk before the world thereby lose their moral power to do good. No matter what their position and influence may be in other respects, they have no power to advance the cause of truth and holiness among men. On the contrary, they are stumbling-blocks to others. If they could be brought to see at one view the moral ruin their inconsistency works, the number who are influenced by it to reject the salvation of the Gospel and perish in their sins, they would start horror-stricken from the scene, and spend the remnant of their lives in contrition and sorrow for their wickedness and folly. But the fact is no less real than if it were open to the view of all. In holiness of heart and life there is moral power. If all who have named the name of Christ were careful to depart from all iniquity, and live before the world as Christ and the apostles lived, in all things and at all times, infidelity and sin would wither in their presence, and the glory of the Lord would speedily fill the whole earth. Who doubts it? Who *can* doubt it? Christian brethren! you who mingle your prayers and vows together at the altar of your com-

mon Lord, and hope and wait for the coming of the kingdom of Christ—whose hearts are pained and stirred within you at every thought of the prevalence of infidelity and wickedness in the earth—think of these things. Think how much depends upon a uniform consistency of life with the grace you profess in your hearts, in warring against the wickedness that is in the world and advancing the Redeemer's kingdom among men. To this work God has appointed his chosen people, and he requires them to be true and faithful in it. The mere outward righteousness of the Pharisee, without the spiritual life within, will not do. We need the inward life to bind us to the ordinances of the Lord and give us delight in them. And then, stimulated by our inward life, and the love it inspires for Christ and the salvation of sinners, if we let our light shine before men in a life of holiness and piety, others will be led, by seeing our good works, to glorify our Father who is in heaven.

VI. That the Lord's Supper is a *sacrament* renders an observance of it peculiarly interesting to those who receive it. By the act of partaking of it they enter into covenant with Christ, to be

his forever. They declare their faith in him as their Redeemer and Mediator, and in the efficacy of his passion and death for the remission of sins. They profess their sole and entire dependence on him for grace to renovate their hearts, to renew and strengthen them in their spiritual life, and to save them from the wrath to come. To this faith they set their seal, and solemnly covenant to continue in it. This imposes the obligation to cherish a love for it by habitual study, meditation, and prayer, that it may be in them a living principle, to preserve them from the delusions of error and the seductions of an evil heart. All truly converted persons feel that in adopting this faith they have not followed a cunningly devised fable. Compared with their experience, it is a demonstration. Its truth and power correspond with their inward consciousness of what is good and acceptable in the sight of God, and they trust in it as the only ground of their hope. The covenant, hence, implies a scrupulous avoidance of everything that may tend to weaken its power and deprive us of its benefits. Here is the ground for effort to "stand fast in the faith." Paul said, as one of the results of his long and

heroic warfare in the cause of Christ, "I have kept the faith." To keep the faith we profess in coming to the Lord's table requires a discriminating watchfulness against the intrusions of error. Our pledge at the sacramental altar is, that we will steadfastly believe God's holy word, and reject all teachings, however plausible and fascinating, which do not prominently present "Christ, and him crucified," as the only ground of the sinner's hope. The reading of those books, and listening to those lectures, which tend to subvert or corrupt this faith, or weaken its power in our hearts, is a violation of the pledge we make when we come to the Lord's table. So, also, are all our acts, and words, and thoughts, which in any way tend to obscure the light of this faith, and alienate our affections from the cross. We solemnly promise and covenant that we will habitually and prayerfully avoid all such acts, and words, and thoughts, and in lowliness of heart learn of Christ and him only.

But communicants pledge themselves to a continuance not only in the *faith*, but also in *love* and *obedience*. No vow can be more sacredly binding than that which we make at the table

of the Lord, to serve him in love and obedience all the days of our lives. It has the nature and force of an *oath*, visibly confirmed in the presence of witnesses by the sacramental act of eating and drinking with our covenant-keeping Lord. How solemn is such a covenant vow! And what adds to its sanctity is, that it is a federal act, in which we become bound to our divine Master to fulfill our covenant obligations; and he, on his part, covenants that he will bestow upon us all the grace we need to sustain and strengthen our spiritual life, and bring us at last to eat bread with him in his heavenly kingdom, if we continue faithful in his service.

As such is the nature and binding force of the sacrament, how does it become us to examine ourselves, and well to consider the solemnity of the act we are about to perform when we approach the table of the Lord! and ponder in our hearts what we have done, and what obligations rest upon us to be faithful in all we have promised, when we retire from it! In all our transactions with men we feel that we must fulfill our promises and pledges to them, or forfeit their confidence, and subject ourselves to humiliation and disgrace.

We have no heart to come into the presence of those we have abused by our insincere professions and promises, much less to presume a renewal of our communion with them. But no pledges we ever made to man are so solemn, or sealed and confirmed in so solemn a manner, as those we make to our Lord and Saviour every time we partake of the holy sacrament. We covenant with him that we will continue steadfast in the faith we profess, and in love and obedience to him. After having thus publicly taken the vows of our God upon us in so solemn a manner, how circumspectly ought we to walk in all things! The Christian should never forget that he is a marked man. The eyes of all are upon him. Whether *he* thinks of his profession, his vows, and his obligations to lead a holy life, or not, *others* do. All the circles in which he moves expect of him conduct corresponding to his professions. This they have a right to do, and professors have no reason to complain of the strict account to which the world, with whom they associate in business and social life, hold them to fulfill all their covenant obligations to God as scrupulously as they hold themselves

bound to fulfill their promises to men. More than this, their own consciences are concerned in keeping their covenant vows. They are made to God and not to man. In the seclusion of the closet as well as in the public walks of life, they should dwell in the heart as a law of life, governing every thought, and word, and act, and leave their impress upon the whole man, in both the inward and outward life. Let all who have thus entered into covenant with God, by a sacramental vow, to be his forever, think of these things.

But some may say, if these things be so, it is better to refrain from communing at the Lord's table altogether, lest after we have vowed we enhance our guilt by failing to perform our vows. Indeed, the remark is often made by serious persons who are thoughtful on the subject of religion: "It is better not to profess, than to profess and not live up to our profession." And we have heard individuals say with apparent sincerity: "I feel the need of religion; but I fear, if I should seek and obtain it, I would not be able to live it;" and thus reasoning they neglect to seek it. This kind of reasoning, there is cause to believe, influences many professors of religion, who have a

just sense of the binding force of their sacramental vows upon them, to refrain from renewing those vows by communing at the Lord's table. This is a snare of the enemy. It is a dreadful snare, and will surely prove the ruin of all who are taken in it. Think of it, you who endeavor to justify your neglect of the sacrament by the plausible pretense that it is better to do so than not to fulfill the obligations it imposes. Is not this making provision for the flesh? What necessity is there that you should *not* perform your sacramental vows after you have made them? Why should you desire to be released from them? Is the Lord a hard master, exacting of his covenanting people what is not for their happiness and benefit? Is not his grace sufficient to enable them to stand fast in the faith, and do all he requires of them, and all they promise in their covenant vows to perform? Why then neglect to take those vows upon you, and renew them at every opportunity, and endeavor to live worthy of the profession you make in so doing, rather than seek to evade the obligations they impose by neglecting the sacrament? What can you gain by refusing to enter into covenant

with your Lord? He is your Redeemer and only Saviour. The covenant he proposes to enter into with you is wholly for your good. It is to bless and save you. He pledges himself, his blood and righteousness, his grace and spirit, all, all that you need for spiritual support and comfort in this life, and the joys of heaven in the world to come! Will you refuse partnership in a covenant which proposes everything for your good, and nothing that will harm you? Will you barter away your proffered "inheritance with the saints in light" for the fancied privilege of enjoying "the pleasures of sin," with a respectable show of consistency between your life and your profession? What will you gain? To whom will you go for the grace and comfort you need to prepare you for happiness in this and the world to come? Who but Christ, whose covenant mercies you spurn and reject, can give you eternal life? O think of these things! Shun the snare which is already entangling your wayward feet. Hasten to the mercy-seat of your covenant-keeping God and Saviour. Banish from your mind every thought which tends to weaken your faith in the sufficiency of his grace to enable

you to keep all your covenant vows, and show forth his praise by a godly life and well-ordered conversation. Thus shall you experience the rich benefits he designs to convey to his faithful followers, through the ordinance of the sacrament which he has instituted for their edification and comfort.

VII. It will occur to all that the benefit derived from our communion at the Lord's table depends much upon the state of our minds when we approach it. A mere formal observance of it, as a part of the routine of religious duties required of us by our profession as members of the Church, without an inward preparation of heart to receive it as a means of grace and spiritual edification, will avail us nothing.

How, then, shall we prepare to receive the communion of the Lord's Supper so as to be profited by it? This is a grave and serious inquiry. Let all who profess the name of Christ take it home to their hearts, and reflect upon it with that religious candor that its importance demands. Christian friends and fellow-members in the body of Christ! in taking my leave of you here, I beseech you to suffer the word of exhortation, as a

parting word from one who loves and wishes well to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

First, then, if you would experience all the benefits designed to be conveyed by our blessed Lord to his beloved followers, through the sacrament, as a means of grace instituted to be observed by them to the end of time, you must "keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude 21. By this is meant, not that you have control of the Spirit, by which "the love of God is shed abroad in the heart," (Rom. v. 5;) but "keep yourselves in the love of God, by building yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." Jude 20, 21. Continually cleave to God, and keep alive in your hearts the fires of devotion which were kindled there when you were brought, through faith, to "discern the Lord's body" in the sacrificial offering he made of himself upon the cross for you, and receive him as your Redeemer and Saviour. This is the "first love" of the Christian. Rev. ii, 4. This was your first love. It is lost by losing sight of the faith—"your most holy faith"—that which brings "Christ crucified" in the mind and

heart, and keeps him there—the "faith which worketh by love." Gal. v, 6. By keeping this faith and this love alive in the soul at all times, you will be prepared to commune with your Lord, and receive all the benefits of so doing every time you have an opportunity.

But again, to continue in such a state of preparation for communion at the Lord's table, constant diligence in all the duties of a Christian life will be necessary. Read the Scriptures; take them as a rule of faith and practice; search them daily, that your faith in the atonement may be daily strengthened and invigorated; commune with God in your closets; let all your thoughts and meditations be employed about God—God your Redeemer and Saviour—and his condescending goodness in saving you. Everywhere, in your fields, and shops, and stores; in the kitchen, the nursery, and the drawing-room; in solitude and in the social circle, keep your minds steadily fixed upon the "cross," and your inheritance in "Christ crucified." If thoughts of the world, its troubles, cares, business, pleasures, come in to obscure your view of the "cross," and your interest in it, repel the first intrusion. Keep your

minds clear and your hearts warm on this theme, and you will have both a desire for the feast of the Lord, and delight in it.

When the sacramental season approaches do not, as it is to be feared many do, burden your minds and bodies with thoughts and labors of a worldly nature up to the very day and hour of your solemn meeting with Christ and his people, to renew your sacramental vows, and then return to the world again with scarcely an impression left upon your souls of the solemn act you have performed; but let the coming occasion occupy your thoughts and interest your feelings. Look forward to it with desire and hope, that it may be to you a "time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." Acts iii, 19. Think of good John, whose heart glowed every day with the fire of the love of God, which was kept continually burning upon the altar of his heart. He remembered the SABBATH as a season appointed by God in which he would meet with his people. He was prepared for it. He was in the Spirit—the spirit of devotion suited to the solemnity of the occasion—and the Lord revealed himself to him in a manner which overwhelmed him with

holy rapture and spiritual delight. So you, dearly beloved in the Lord, keeping the seasons of communion with your Lord in your minds, looking forward to them with increasing desire as they approach, and then coming with heart and mind prepared to throw yourselves beneath the cross, and behold "Christ crucified" for you through the sign he has instituted to help your faith and inflame your love, shall realize those glorious manifestations of his grace which he has promised to those who, with sincere hearts, and in obedience to his command, remember him in his ordinance. Were all who profess to be the disciples of Christ imbued with the Spirit which characterized his primitive followers, to attend to his ordinances with the same faith and love with which they observed them, what moral power they would exert in banishing error and vice from the world! Then would the Church "look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Cant. vi, 10. The Lord hasten the day for his mercy's sake! AMEN.

THE END.